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Thesis

IMAGERY IN PARADISE LOST

by

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## Introduction

This thesis is an attempt to point out several directions in which the detailed examination of the sources of Milton's images seems to throw new light on the poet and his works. The plan embodies the viewing of Paradise Lost in the light of the understanding thrown by the imagery on Milton's personality, temperament, and thought, and on the theme and characters of his great epic.

The theme chosen by Milton for his great effort, viz. the Fall of Man and his expulsion from Paradise--perhaps the most momentous incident in the history of the human race--worthy of the great poet, and in the treatment of which Milton was sublimely successful, lends itself particularly well to the study of his imagery. The newly created Earth; the untainted loveliness of the Paradise in which our first parents dwelt during their innocence; their temptation; their fall and removal from the happy garden, furnished a theme rich with opportunities for the display of his poetic imagery.

Though the chief interest in the poem is centered in the Garden of Eden and its occupants, Milton was enabled, by the comprehensive manner in which he treated his subject, to introduce into his work a cosmology which embraced not only the system to which our globe belongs, but the entire starry heavens by which we are surrounded. But the universality of his genius did not rest here. In the utterance of his sacred song he soared beyond the starry sphere, describing himself as "Wrapt above the pole"--up to the Empyrian, Heaven of heavens, the ineffable abode of the







Deity and the blissful habitation of angelic beings who in adoration and worship, surround the throne of the most high.

Milton's Paradise Lost may be regarded as the loftiest intellectual effort in the whole range of literature. In it we find all that was known of science, philosophy, and theology. The theme, founded upon a Bible narration itself written under divine inspiration, embraces the entire system of Christian doctrine as revealed in the Scriptures, and many of the noblest passages in the sacred volume are introduced into the poem expressed in the lofty utterance of flowing and harmonious verse. The choicest classical writings of Greek and Latin authors; the mythological and traditional beliefs of ancient nations; historical incidents of valour and renown and all that was great and good in the annals of mankind were laid under contribution by Milton in the illustration and embellishment of his poem.

It seems scarcely necessary to say that the images which this empyreal theme caused to be conjured up in the mind of Milton mirror the richest experience and the most profound and soaring imagination known to man. To deal with them adequately would call for great powers, as well as a lifetime of study and experience, for the problems which they give rise to and the light they throw on literary substance and technique are as profound as the mind from which they spring.

My present approach to the task of analyzing and categorizing the imagery in the 'Great Epic of Man' is chiefly responsible to Dr. Caroline F. E. Spurgeon who made an exhaustive study of 'Imagery in Shakespeare'. I believe that her method of approach to Shakespeare enabled her to get





nearer to Shakespeare himself, to his mind, his tastes, his experiences, and his deeper thought than does any other single way of studying him. I believe this system throws light from a fresh angle upon Shakespeare's imaginative and pictorial vision, upon his own plays and the characters in them, and it seems to serve as an absolute beacon in the skies with regard to the vexed question of authorship.

I am fully conscious of my boldness for venturing to even touch upon the subject, for I know well that I can only scratch the surface of what is possible to find and reveal in the rich and varied material of Paradise Lost. I am aware also that in order for this thesis to be successful even mildly in its aim it should embrace all the works of Milton--his prose as well as his poetry--his pamphlets against the Presbyterians, the tyranny of the Established Church, the education of priests, the theory of divine rights of kings, etc., as well as his other poetic writings. I am keenly aware of the limitations of this approach, but I hope that my effort will duplicate in a small measure the success of Dr. Spurgeon's thorough-going study, and I will the matter of a more exhaustive study to some one better able than I to attempt.





## Chapter I

### DEFINITION OF AN IMAGE

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## Chapter I

### DEFINITION OF AN IMAGE

"The real revelation of the writer (as of the artist) comes in a far subtler way than by...autobiography; and comes despite all efforts to elude it;...for what the writer does communicate is his temperament, his organic personality, with its preferences and aversions, its pace and rhythm and impact and balance, its swiftness and languor...and this he does equally well whether he be rehearsing veraciously his own concerns or inventing  
<sup>1</sup>  
 someone else's."

I believe it to be profoundly true that the real revelation of the writer's personality, temperament and quality of mind is to be found in his works, whether he be dramatist or novelist, describing other people's thoughts or putting down his own directly.

In the case of the poet, it is chiefly through his images that he, to some extent unconsciously, gives himself away. He may be entirely objective in his dramatic characters and their views and opinions, yet, like the man under stress of emotion who will show no sign of it in eye or face, but will reveal it in some muscular tension, the poet unwittingly lays bare his innermost likes and dislikes, observations and interests, associations of thought, attitudes of mind and beliefs, in and through the images, the verbal pictures he draws to illuminate something quite different in the speech and thought of his characters.

The imagery he instinctively uses is thus a revelation, largely unconscious, given at a moment of heightened feeling, of the furniture of

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1 Woolf, Virginia, Orlando, pp 189-90





his mind, the channels of his thought, the qualities of things, the objects of things he observes and remembers, and perhaps most significant of all, those that he does not observe and remember.

Dr. Spurgeon believes that the above statement "works out more reliably in drama than in pure poetry, because in a poem the writer is more definitely and consciously seeking the images; whereas in drama, and especially drama written red-hot as was the Elizabethan, images tumble out of the mouths of the characters in the heat of the writer's feeling or passion, as they naturally surge up in his mind."<sup>1</sup>

The greater and richer the work the more valuable and suggestive become the images, so that in the case of Milton one can scarcely overrate the possibilities of what may be discovered through a systematic study of them.

The term 'image' is used here as the only available word to cover every kind of simile, as well as every kind of "what is really compressed simile" metaphor.<sup>2</sup> We may think of it as connoting any and every kind of imaginative picture or other experience, drawn in every kind of way, which may have come to the poet, not only through any of his senses, but through his mind and emotions as well, and which he uses, in the form of simile and metaphor in their widest sense, for the purpose of analogy.

Mr. Middleton Murray in his penetrating essay 'Metaphor', says that "the investigation of metaphor is curiously like the investigation of any of the primary data of consciousness; it cannot be led very far without being led to the very borderline of sanity."<sup>3</sup> He draws attention to the way

1 Spurgeon, Caroline F. E., Shakespeare's Imagery, pp 4-5

2 Ibid

p 5

3 Murray, Middleton, Countries of the Mind, "Metaphor", Oxford University Press, 1931





in which sensuous perception and spiritual intuition are both necessary to the great poet and also to the fact that "his constant accumulation of vivid sense-perception supplies the most potent means by which he articulates his spiritual intuitions." He shows how the subject he is contemplating stirs, for instance, in Milton's imagination 'a picture, half visible, half spiritual' which gives rise to the imagery he creates to express and adorn it.

We know that, roughly speaking, the image is the little word-picture used by a poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought. It is "a description or an idea, which by comparison or analogy, stated or understood, with something else, transmits to us through the emotions and associations it arouses, something of the 'wholeness', the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceives or has felt what<sup>1</sup> he is telling us."

This treatise will not dwell at any length on the question of the definition of an image because the primary concern is with the content rather than the form of images, which fact makes it unnecessary to enter on any detailed discussion of formal classification. However, out of fairness to the reader, I feel that a brief consideration of the general types of images and the service each performs in imaginative writing must be made before we move along in this study.

We have been speaking of images as if all of them were pictures. And as a matter of fact, the great majority of images do appeal to the sense of sight by being made up of color, form, and motion. Yet other forms of

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1 Spurgeon, Caroline F. E., Shakespeare's Imagery p 5





material are equally the material of imagery--"images of sound, of taste, of touch, of smell, of temperature, of sensations in the vital organs and in the muscles."<sup>1</sup> Except for images of sound, most of the list seldom play

a part in writing. They deserve attention not only because they are neglected, but because when they are used they are generally effective.

Some words, or patterns of words, make pleasing or suggestive sound-images irrespective of their meaning, that is, words that recall sense impressions. We know that in imaginative writing concrete words are usually preferable to abstract. They are preferable because they are imaginative.

"Satan was driven out of heaven", is not so imaginative as,

"Him the Almighty Power  
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell  
In adamant chains and penal fire,  
Who durst defy the Omnipotent in arms." 2

"Hell is a terrible place", is not so imaginative as,

"A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,  
As one great furnace, flamed; yet from those flames  
No light; but rather darkness visible  
Served only to discover sights of woe,  
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes  
That comes at all; But torture without end  
Still surges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed." 3

The entire Bible, a book of precept, philosophy, and theology, where, of all places, one might expect teeming abstractions, is instead a treasure-house of concrete imagery.

1 Williams, George G., Creative Writing, Harper & Bros. Publishers, N.Y. & London, 1936, Ch. VII p 158

2 Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 44-48

3 Ibid 61-70





"Wickedness is vain," becomes, "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity."

"The froward shall have many hardships," becomes, "Thorns and stones are in the way of the froward."

"There shall be peacefulness," becomes, "The lion and the lamb shall lie together, and a little child shall lead them."

"They shall have no decent burial," becomes, "And their dead bodies will be for meat unto the fowl of heaven, and to the beasts of earth." <sup>1</sup>

In every good writer there is a similar urge to transform the abstract into the concrete. Hardly a bald, factual statement exists but it can be dignified and vivified by concrete imaginative expression.

Milton describes the defeated but undaunted Lucifer as,

"Their dread commander; he above the rest  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost  
All its original brightness; nor appeared  
Less than archangel ruined, and the excess  
Of glory obscured." <sup>2</sup>

Milton indulges in personification:

"As when the sun, new risen  
Looks through the horizontal misty air  
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs." <sup>3</sup>

The simple fact that Satan was much affected becomes concrete:

"Thrice he essayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,  
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth; at last  
Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way." <sup>4</sup>

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1 Williams, George G., Creative Writing, Harper & Bros. Publishers, N.Y. & London, 1936, Ch. VII, p 159

2 Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 589-94

3 Ibid 594-99

4 Ibid 61-70





One could easily devote a volume to arriving at a definition of an image, elaborating, safeguarding, and illustrating it, and to discussing what a metaphor is and the philosophy which lies behind it. "...I incline to believe that analogy--likeness between dissimilar things--which is the fact underlying the possibility of metaphor, holds within itself the very secret of the universe. The bare fact that germinating seeds or falling leaves are actually another expression of the processes we see at work in human life and death, thrills me, as it must others, with a sense of being here in the presence of a great mystery, which, could we only understand it, would<sup>1</sup> explain life and death."

The poet knows that this is so, ultimately if not rationally; and he is a poet largely by virtue of the power he has, greater than other men, of perceiving hidden likenesses, and by his words, "unveiling the permanent<sup>2</sup> analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth". Hence it is that great metaphor in great poetry moves and stirs us in a way impossible to account for purely rationally and logically. It stirs us because it touches or awakens something in us, which I think we must call spiritual, at the very roots of our being. For, "as the poet well knows, as does also the seer and prophet, it is only by means of these hidden analogies that the greatest truths, otherwise inexpressible, can be given form and<sup>3</sup> shape capable of being grasped by the human mind."

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1 Spurgeon, Caroline F. E., Shakespeare's Imagery, p 6

2 Ibid

p 7

3 Ibid





## Chapter II

### General Subject-Matter of the Imagery

in Paradise Lost

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## Chapter II

### General Subject-Matter of the Imagery

#### in Paradise Lost

In the preceeding chapter I ventured to state that we can draw from the material of a poet's images definite information about his personality. In following this line of reasoning I suggest that a poet will tend to draw the large proportion of his images from the objects he knows best, or thinks most about, or from incidents, among the myriads he has experienced, to which he is sensitive, and which therefore remain within his knowledge. According to Boring,--imagery (and all memory as well) is creative...for "the process of imagination involves an active reaction and is not merely a passive recall of past events. The image is influenced by the person's interests and attitudes and by past experience. In this, imagination...is<sup>1</sup> an active integrating reaction to stimulus." In other words, memory is not purely a storehouse, it is a selecting machine, and the fact that our instrument of memory selects certain things or aspects shows that they have a certain attraction for us, a certain suitability to our temperaments or it may function in the opposite way too and cause us to remember things because they are particularly repugnant to us.

A close observation of Milton's work will reveal that, quite apart from style and method of forming the images, he has a certain range of images which are characteristic of him and that he has a marked and constant tendency to use a much larger number of one or two kinds. Thus, to give

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<sup>1</sup> Boring, Edwin Gerrigues, Psychology, A Factual Textbook, Ch. 14, p 347





an example, Milton's images are drawn in the main from nature (growing things, the sea, weather, seasons) from literature, (the classics, mythology, the old and new testaments), from movement, (bodies and objects), and from astronomy. Of the above mentioned group, astronomy forms the very core about which all other images of Paradise Lost are distributed.

H. Edward Weatherby believes that "In the whole history of English literature there is no single writer except Shakespeare who achieved such a commanding excellence in poetry, such a universal sweep of imagination."<sup>1</sup> Indeed this imaginative preoccupation with the dazzling heights and vast spaces of the universe is, together with a magnificent surging upward thrust and aspiration, the dominating note of Milton's mind. This tendency toward the cosmic is borne out in Adam's speech to Raphael:

"When I behold this goodly Frame, this World  
Of Heav'n and Earth consisting, and compute,  
Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a graine,  
An Atom with the Firmament compar'd  
And all her numbered Starrs, that seem to rowle  
Spaces incomprehensible (for such  
Thir distance argues and thir swift return  
Diurnal) meerly to officiate light  
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,  
One day and night; in all thir vast survey  
Useless besides, reasoning I oft admire,  
How Nature wise and frugal could commit  
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
So many nobler Bodies to create,  
Greater so manifold to this one use,  
For aught appears, and on thir Orbs impose  
Such restless revolution day by day  
Repeated..."

2

Paradise Lost is an 'astronomical masterpiece'. Milton was acquainted

<sup>1</sup> Weatherby, H. Edward, The English Heritage, Vol. I, p 337

<sup>2</sup> Milton, Paradise Lost, Book VIII, ll 15-32





with the Copernican system, having conversed with Galileo when he visited Italy in 1639, but his imagination is held by the Ptolemaic system, which so well corresponds to the testimony of our senses. Dr. Spurgeon thinks it possible that the "myth of Phaeton driving his horses across the sky, so dear to the Elizabethan poetic mind, was responsible for the unwillingness of the poets to give up the conception of the sun revolving round a fixed earth; and not the sun only, but also all the planets and stars, moving in fixed concentric spheres centered on the earth."<sup>1</sup>

This latter idea fires Milton's imagination, and his references to the movement of stars in their sphere's especially in imagery are very many. He is attracted by the conception of the primum mobile, the greater outer tenth space, which according to Ptolemy, communicated its movement to all the lower spheres:

"They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fixt,  
And that Crystalline Sphear whose ballance weighs  
The Trepidation talkt, and that first moved."

2

Upon the completion of the creation we have Milton's invitation to exultation and joy, the work of God is done, 'sing praise', let the Empyreal choir sing its 'music of the spheres':

"...the Harp  
Had work and rested not, the solemn Pipe,  
And Dulcimer, all Organs of sweet stop,  
All sounds on Fret by String or Golden Wire  
Temper'd soft Tunings, intermixt with Voice  
Choral or Unison; of incense Clouds  
Fuming from Golden Censers hid the Mount."

3

In considering further his absorption in the 'astronomical' we observe

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1 Spurgeon, Caroline F. E., Shakespeare's Imagery, Ch. II, p 21

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book III, ll 481-483

3 Ibid VII, ll 594-600



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that he laments, after delivering his magnificent apostrophe to 'holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born", baffled and beaten in the political field, when total blindness falls on him:

"I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,  
 Taught by the heavenly muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
 Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou  
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,  
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more  
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,  
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,  
 Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget  
 These other two equall'd with me in fate,  
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,  
 Blind Thamyras and blind Maeonides,  
 And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old.  
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year  
 Seasons return, but not to me returns  
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
 Presented with a universal blank  
 Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,  
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
 So much the rather, thou celestial light,  
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
 Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
 Of things invisible to mortal sight."

1

From the very beginning, from the time of his return from the Continent

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book III, ll 23-55





in 1639, it had been Milton's ambition to compose some grand poem on the  
<sup>1</sup>  
 origin and government of the universe; certain parts of Paradise Lost  
<sup>2</sup>  
 may be regarded as the final result of this early tendency. This celestial  
 element, by engendering a sense of the eternal and universal, became one  
 of the principle sources of inspiration in the poet, and may be discovered  
 as the driving force in the impulse towards the "Sublime Style".

The pictures he creates tend to partake of this celestial and  
 magnificent quality; thus Satan moving toward the shore of the 'lake of  
 fire' becomes:

"When the superior fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore: his ponderous shield  
 Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,  
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
 Hung on his shoulder like the moon..." <sup>3</sup>

Angels may travel along the flaring beams cast by the sun between  
 heaven and earth; as in the passages subjoined:

"Thither came Uriel, gliding through the Even  
 On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting Starr  
 In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd  
 Impress the Air, and shews the Mariner  
 From what point of his Compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds:..." <sup>4</sup>

Or when he describes Uriel's return to the Garden of Eden:

"..and Uriel to the charge  
 Returned on the bright beam, whose point now raised  
 Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen  
 Beneath the Azores..." <sup>5</sup>

Milton reveals the staggering extent of his imaginative grasp on the

1 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, p 10

2 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, p 62

3 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 283-289

4 Ibid Bk IV, ll 555-560

5 Ibid ll 589-592





universe--its tremendous sweep. Yet, he manages to inject his point of view concerning the place of woman in society--his theory that what the husband bids it is the duty of the wife "unargued to obey"<sup>1</sup>-- when he employs 'mother nature' as an analogy for his description of Eve:

"Shee as a vail down to the slender waste  
Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
Disshaveled, but in wanton ringlets wav'd  
As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd  
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
And by her yeilded, by him best receivd,  
Yeilded with coy submission, modest pride,  
And sweet reluctant amorous delay."

2

When Milton draws his images from nature they are more general, (as compared with Shakespeare) dealing with large tracts of country, the lay of the land, hills and valleys, coppices and woods.

Milton's sea images are general, chiefly of storms, waves, and are employed mainly to heighten the intensity of a mood or movement. In Book I he draws upon mythology and the Bible for sea monsters to emphasize the size of Satan as he "lay floating many a rood".

"..in bulk as huge  
As when the fables name of monstrous size  
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove;  
Breoreos or Typhon, whom the den  
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast  
Leviathon, which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream.  
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,  
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,  
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind  
Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:  
So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay!"

3

1 Austin, Alfred, The Bridling of Pegasus, p 70

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book IV, ll 304-310

3 Ibid, Book I, ll 196-209





The movements of the cruel, fiery deluge, fiery gulf, fiery surge, burning lake, the lake with liquid fire, oblivious pool, Stygian flood, make a concrete symbol of the eternal punishment and horror of fiery hell. Milton's sea pictures are chiefly concerned with the general quality or aspect of the sea as it might be viewed by a landsman.

Milton seems to approve of war; God, in turn, approves of war, and believes it necessary to a State:

"...Gabriel sat  
Chief of th' Angelic Guards, awaiting night;  
About him exercised Heroic Games  
Th' unarmed Youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand  
Celestial Armourie, Shields, Helmes, and Speares  
Hung high with Diamond flaming, and with Gold." 1

"...in Milton's mind, it is quite possible that the devil is the evil element in every man, and even in God, that is to be combatted severally;..." 2

It is preparedness, conditioning for war against this evil element which causes Milton to condone war. When the state of the nation was such that he felt it time to return to England from Italy and take up his fight against the Episcopalian tyranny, there was little hesitation in his

'earnest soul'. Saurat informs us that Milton "gave up his throne of political glory, and eagerly became an obscure workman in the service of God." 3

"When God commands to take the Trumpet, and blows a dolorous or jarring blast, it lies not in man's world what he shall say, or what he shall conceal." 4

Milton's images include many drawn from light and darkness, the contrast

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book IV, ll 549-550

2 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, p 211

3 Ibid

4 Milton, The Reason of Church Government, in Prose Works II, p 477





between artificial and natural light, and many other 'light effects'. His poetry is crammed with references to agreeable effects of light and color. Color plays a major role in his poetic imagination, and he is sensitive to all its varied shades, creating artistic effects by employing them in contrasting and conflicting shades. The remarkable passage in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost* describes the coming of night, into which Milton put all the intensity of feeling of which his soul was capable, thus achieving an artistic effect of the first order:

"Now came still Evening on, and Twilight  
Had in her sober Liverie all things clad;  
Silence accompanied, for Beast and Bird,  
They to thir grassie Couch, these to thir Nests  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful Nightingale;  
She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the Firmament  
With living Saphirs: Hesperus that led  
The starrie Host, rode brightest, till the Moon  
Rising in clouded Majestie, at length  
Apparent Queen unvaild her peerless light,  
And o're the dark her Silver Mantle threw." 1

To Taine the changes of illumination become "a pious procession of vague beings who fill the soule with the spirit of veneration." (Taine. <sup>2</sup> *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*).

Book One, Paradise Lost begins at a curious point. The rebellious angels have been cast into hell, where utter darkness prevails--although it is filled with fire:

"At once, as far as Angels kenn, he (i.e. Satan) views  
The dismal situation waste and wild.  
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
As one great furnace flowed; yet from those flames

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book IV, ll 598-609

2 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, p 71



between individual and general light, and many other 'light effects'. His poetry is concerned with reference to general effects of light and color. Color plays a major role in his poetic imagination, and he is sensitive to all its varied shades, creating artistic effects by varying color in composition and decorative shades. The remarkable passage in the fourth book of Paradise Lost describes the coming of night, into which Milton put all the intensity of feeling of which his soul was capable, thus achieving an artistic effect of the first order:

"Now came still Evening on, and Twilight  
Held in her sober lids all things at rest;  
Silence accompanied, for birds and beasts,  
They to their several couch, there to their slumber,  
There to their quietude, all the world retired;  
The all night long her watchful silence kept;  
Silence was pleased: now close'd the firmament  
With living Spheres: Hesperus first led  
The starry host, sole brightness, all the host  
Leading in ordered ranks, as long as  
A quiet peace prevail'd her quiet reign;  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

To join the changes of illumination become "a poetic procession of various points and fill the world with the spirit of consolation." (Taine, I)

Book One, Paradise Lost begins at a certain point. The rebellion against man has been cast into hell, where after decades previous--although it is filled with life:

"At once, as far as Angels know, he (Satan) views  
The dismal situation waste and wild.  
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames



No light; but rather darkness visible  
Served only to discover sights of woe,  
Regions of sorrow, doleful shade.." 1

In describing Beelzebub, Milton says:

"If thou beest he--but O, Now fall'n! how changed  
From him who, in the happy realms of light,  
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
Myriads, though bright!" 2

Light to Milton very noticeably represents all good things, enlightenment of every kind, both mental and spiritual: truth, virtue, knowledge, understanding, reason, and the very essence of God himself.

"For those rebellious; here their prison ordained  
In utter darkness, and their portions set  
As far removed from God and light of heaven,  
As from the center thrice to the utmost pole." 3

I have already mentioned the universal sweep of his imagination. This sweep is embodied in his overpowering attraction to the quality of movement, nature, and objects in motion. This love of movement is a good example of how a study of the subject-matter of his images may throw light on his poetic technique. It leads us to note how constantly in description it is the aspect of movement he seizes upon and portrays. It is interesting to note how, by introducing verbs of movement about things which are motionless, or rather which are abstractions and cannot have physical movement, he gives life to a whole phrase:

"Whose guile  
Stir'd up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd  
The Mother of Mankind.." 4

- 
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1 Milton, <u>Paradise Lost</u> , Book I, ll | 59-65 |
| 2 Ibid                                      | 84-87 |
| 3 Ibid                                      | 71-74 |
| 4 Ibid                                      | 34-36 |





Or:

"his Pride  
Had cast him out from Heav'n with his Host  
Of Rebel Angels..." 1

By employing personification he again endows abstractions with a sense of life:

"...doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
That comes at all;" 2

He paints a poignant picture of God's creation of the Universe:

"Thou from the first  
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss  
And mads't it pregnant..." 3

In the above passage he attributes life to the Abyss:

He condemns Satan for introducing gold to man:

"...by him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands  
Rifl'd the bowels of their Mother Earth  
For Treasure better hid." 4

He paints a vivid picture of the dark-angels after their defeat:

"...Now they lye  
Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire." 5

In describing Uriel's celestial movement he dazzles us with:

"...Swift as a shooting star." 6

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book I, ll 36-38

2 Ibid 65-67

3 Ibid 19-22

4 Ibid 684-688

5 Ibid 277-280

6 Ibid 589

Or:

"His Wife"

Had said that she was not with him  
Of her husband...

By depicting her husband's side in the story, the author...

of life:

"...the first thing I saw  
and that was not her, but her husband  
That was the first thing I saw"

the picture of a woman's side of the story...

"The first thing I saw  
was her husband, and that was not her  
The first thing I saw was her husband  
and that was not her..."

In the story, the author depicts the life of the...

the author depicts the life of the...

"...by the first  
and that was not her, but her husband  
The first thing I saw was her husband  
and that was not her..."

He is a very... of the...

"...of the first  
The first thing I saw was her husband  
and that was not her..."

In the story, the author depicts the life of the...

"...the first thing I saw  
and that was not her, but her husband  
The first thing I saw was her husband  
and that was not her..."

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1	11/11/11	11/11/11
2	11/11/11	11/11/11
3	11/11/11	11/11/11
4	11/11/11	11/11/11
5	11/11/11	11/11/11
6	11/11/11	11/11/11
7	11/11/11	11/11/11
8	11/11/11	11/11/11
9	11/11/11	11/11/11
10	11/11/11	11/11/11



Or his description full of softened light and fancy:

"...gliding through the  
Even on a sunbeam."

1

Milton was proud of his ability with the sword and considered himself a formidable match for anyone inclined to test his arm and eye. He was agile in body as in mind and his marked delight in swift bodily movement leads one to surmise that there was experience behind it.

We find Milton drawing many of his images from body and bodily action, such actions as Satan falling from a height "to bottomless perdition;" (l.45-47) or Satan climbing:

"..that steep savage Hill  
...so thick entwined  
As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth  
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
All path of Man or Beast."

2

Satan's forces marching "In perfect Phalanx"; (l.550), Satan eagerly pursuing his way through Chaos on his way to earth "with head, hands, wings, or feet...Swims or sinks, wades or creeps, or flies;" (2. 949-950), Satan leaping over the wall of Eden and lighting "on his feet"; (4.178-183), the dancing of the "Beavie of fair Women richly gay in gems and wanton dress;" (ll. 578-580), and so on.

Milton has an instinct for moving on in a continuous motion.

"Indeed", Binyon says, "it is the continuity of sustained rhythm, sustained not only by the drawn-out harmonies of sound but by the momentum of intellectual energy within them, so we seem as if borne onward over an ocean

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book I, ll 555-556

2 Ibid Book IV, ll 172-177

Or his description will of someone like the boy:

"...looking through the

1

evening a number of

Alison was proud of his ability with the sword and considered himself

a formidable warrior for anyone inclined to test his sword arm. He was

quite as good as the king and his sword gleamed in every battle against

himself and in battles that there was no longer a doubt as to

the king's sword being one of the best from any of the

region, such as the sword which was a gift to the king

from the king's father, the king's sword.

"...that sword was a gift

to the king's father

as the king's father, the king's sword

or sword was a gift to the king's father

all of the king's father

Alison's father, the king's father, the king's father

Alison's father, the king's father, the king's father

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out of sight of land--it is this which above all is Milton's peculiar  
<sup>1</sup>  
 power among poets." This tendency toward sustained motion is reflected in  
 the musical side of Milton's poetry. He adds: "In his use of language  
 Milton seems to be powerfully influenced by the art of music and to aim  
 at producing analogous pleasure; sentences long drawn out; apt numbers, fit  
 quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse  
<sup>2</sup>  
 into another." His natural instrument was "the paragraph or period; on this,  
<sup>3</sup>  
 rather than on line or stanza his verse is built." Thus his innate  
 tendency toward sustained motion affects not only the movement of the verse  
 but the imagery--the pictorial as well as the musical side of Milton's  
 poetry. It will conduce to a kind of imagery which sweeps over details  
 and accidents to establish larger relations.

We see in the preceeding pages various types of movement employed  
 by Milton. Beginning with the Fall of Man, he has us following the tribes  
 of Israel, following the course of shooting stars, he leads us from Hell,  
 through Chaos into the Garden of Eden, and, the grandest of all, he  
 displays his kaleidoscopic imagination in his presentation of the universe  
 under the Ptolemaic system, with the nine spheres whirling around the  
 Earth.

Biblical images are numerous in quantity and range. His mind is  
 steeped in Biblical story and phrase and throughout his work there is  
 a severe piety and pious phrasing. Milton's mind is absolutely at home

---

1 Binyon, Laurance, A Note on Milton's Imagery and Rhythm, p 191

2 Ibid

p 186

3 Ibid

out of sight of land--it is this which above all is Milton's peculiar  
 power, more poetic. This tendency toward sustained action is reflected in  
 the magical side of Milton's poetry. He writes: "In his use of language  
 Milton seems to be powerfully influenced by the art of magic and to aim  
 at producing analogous phenomena; sometimes long drawn out, and answers, the  
 density of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out into the verse  
 into another." His natural assumption was that language is magic, and this  
 is shown in his use of words. "Thus his language  
 tendency toward sustained action without any loss of the sense, and  
 the fact is--the historical and the magical side of Milton's  
 poetry. It will compare to a kind of magic which works over details  
 and incidents to establish lower relations.  
 He was in the preceding pages Milton's sense of action as enjoyed  
 by Milton. Beginning with the Fall of Man, he has as following the lines  
 of action, following the course of another story, he looks up and tells  
 through these into the vision of man, and the growth of all.  
 Alpheus and his daughter's invitation to his presentation of the rainbow  
 under the Ptolemaic system, with the line between action and the  
 action.  
 Milton's sense of action is clearly the same. His line is  
 marked in Milton's story and he is the same in his line as  
 in some place and place. Milton's line is absolutely of home



in the whole of Biblical story, Old and New Testaments alike, and moves there naturally, drawing easily and readily for illustration upon lesser as well as generally known incidents, often visualized and pondered upon, and thus vivid and familiar to his imagination.

In drawing out his analogies between the characters in his epic poem he draws freely upon such names and places as Sion (Zion) Hill, a hill in Jeruseleum, the site of David and his successors; Siloa's Brook, (Siloam), a spring and pool of water near Jeruseleum (John IX. 7); Seraph (by which title Satan addresses his followers) one of an order of celestial beings, conceived as fiery and purifying ministers of Jehovah; Leviathon, an aquatic monster, which he used in creating his metaphor with the vanquished Satan, an 'Island' on the 'Norway foam', and the 'Pilot' fixing his anchor into the beast's 'skaly rind', Tophet, (Old Testament) a place in a valley where human sacrifices to Molloch were held--Hell; Gehenna, the valley of Himmon, near Jeruseleum, used as a receptacle for refuse, fires being kept up to prevent pestilence, hence Hell in the New Testament. He shows how God was abused in 'Brute Images', delving into Hebraic and Egyptian religious history; Dagon, Mammon, Baalam, Astharath, Rimmon, Osiris, Isis, Orus, Oreb, Bethel and Don, ad infinitum, all play a role in description and comparison.

Details of Biblical story are clearly very familiar to him, and he uses them constantly for illustration. Thus in describing Molloch he cites a number of similar instances in religious history as well as in the classics to illustrate the impiety of human beings, of the idolatry,





of their devil worship, 'brute image', worship, etc.

T. S. Eliot believes Milton's aural sense is predominant in his work, but seems to deny him any visual imagination. He says: "It is not a particular ploughman, milkmaid, and shepherd that Milton sees, (as Wordsworth might see them); the sensuous effect of these verses is entirely on the ear, and is joined to the concepts of plowman, milkmaid, and shepherd."<sup>1</sup> (We will discuss his 'aural imagination' further on when we study his senses and we will see that he was an impassioned lover of the art of music, and it is not merely a vague emotional stimulation such as romantic poets write of, it is the delight of the trained ear).

Milton knows the value of martial music and he employs the 'Flutes and soft Recorders' to raise the spirit of Satan's excommunicated 'Demi-Gods!

"In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of Flutes and soft Recorders, such as rais'd  
To highth of Noblest temper Hero's old." 2

It is natural for Milton to associate ceremony with trumpets--they go together in the pomp of court life:

"With awful ceremony  
And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim." 3

A fuller note is released when he goes on to speak of the Heavens:

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1 Eliot, T. S., In *Essays and Studies* by Members of the Eng. Assoc.

A Note on the Verse of John Milton.

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book I, ll 550-552

3 Ibid 754-755

of these social groups, 'white' and 'black', and  
 P. B. Miller believes that the social group is a  
 unit, and seems to have his own social organization. He says it is  
 not a 'primitive' group, but a 'modern' group, and that it is  
 'modern' in the sense that it has a 'modern' social organization.  
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It is natural for Miller to assume that the social group is a  
 unit, and that it is 'modern' in the sense that it has a 'modern' social organization.  
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 and that it is 'modern' in the sense that it has a 'modern' social organization.  
 and that it is 'modern' in the sense that it has a 'modern' social organization.

I think, P. B. Miller, in his paper, and in his book, 'The Social Group',  
 a note on the social group.  
 P. B. Miller, 'The Social Group', 1950, p. 100-101.  
 100-101



"While overhead the Moon  
Sits Arbitress, and nearer to the Earth  
Wheels her pale course, they on thir Mirth and dance  
Intent, with jocund Music charm his ear:"

1

We will observe that Milton's sense of form integrates the above-mentioned subject-matter of Paradise Lost, making it a unified, well coordinated whole. In this respect, the part played by recurrent images in raising, developing, sustaining and repeating emotions in the twelve books of Paradise Lost is an important one. It is a part somewhat analogous to the action or recurrent theme or 'motif' in a musical fugue, sonata, or symphony. e. g. Bethoven's Fifth Symphony's ....- (dit dit dit da) motif which keeps reappearing throughout in various states of attire and which became so popular during World War II as a symbol of Allied Victory. Thus this theme or motif represents the dominant picture or sensation which Milton sees and feels as the main problem or theme of his epic, and, in turn, he gives, us a direct glimpse into the workings of his own mind and imagination. Our study will bring to our attention the fact that 'The fall of Man', the 'motif' of Paradise Lost, recurs with regular frequency throughout the twelve books, attired in numerous types of imagery.

In listing and discussing the subject-matter of Milton's imagery, I have tried to show that Milton's personality may be better understood

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Book I, ll 784-787





through a study of his imagery, and to prepare the way for a more specific study.

through a study of his history, and to prepare the way for a more

specific study.



### Chapter III Sources of Imagery: Milton's Senses

#### Chapter III

#### Sources of Imagery:

#### Milton's Senses

In looking at Milton's imagery, it appears as if there is a certain systematic order in the way he uses his senses. The first thing that strikes one is the way he uses sight. He seems to be particularly fond of visual imagery, and this is evident from the very beginning of the poem. He starts with a description of the "bright" and "glorious" scene of Eden, and then goes on to describe the "dark" and "dreary" scene of Hell. This contrast between light and dark is a recurring theme in the poem, and it is one of the main sources of its imagery. The way Milton uses sight is not just to describe the physical world, but to create a sense of atmosphere and mood. He uses sight to make the reader feel like they are actually there, experiencing the events of the poem firsthand. This is one of the reasons why Milton's imagery is so powerful and memorable.

The second thing that strikes one is the way Milton uses sound. He seems to be particularly fond of auditory imagery, and this is evident from the very beginning of the poem. He starts with a description of the "sweet" and "harmonious" sound of the birds in Eden, and then goes on to describe the "loud" and "noisy" sound of the demons in Hell. This contrast between sweet and loud is another recurring theme in the poem, and it is one of the main sources of its imagery. The way Milton uses sound is not just to describe the physical world, but to create a sense of atmosphere and mood. He uses sound to make the reader feel like they are actually there, experiencing the events of the poem firsthand. This is one of the reasons why Milton's imagery is so powerful and memorable.

The third thing that strikes one is the way Milton uses touch. He seems to be particularly fond of tactile imagery, and this is evident from the very beginning of the poem. He starts with a description of the "soft" and "smooth" touch of the grass in Eden, and then goes on to describe the "rough" and "hard" touch of the rocks in Hell. This contrast between soft and rough is another recurring theme in the poem, and it is one of the main sources of its imagery. The way Milton uses touch is not just to describe the physical world, but to create a sense of atmosphere and mood. He uses touch to make the reader feel like they are actually there, experiencing the events of the poem firsthand. This is one of the reasons why Milton's imagery is so powerful and memorable.

Chapter III  
 Government of the  
 United States



Chapter III  
Sources of Imagery:  
Milton's Senses

Part I  
Sight

Dr. Spurgeon writes: "In any analysis arrived at through his poetry of the quality and characteristics of a writer's senses, it is possible in some degree to separate and estimate his senses of touch, smell, hearing and taste, but his visual sense is so all-embracing--for it is indeed the gateway by which so large a portion of life reaches the poet, and the registration, description, and interpretation of things seen depend so completely on the faculties of mind and imagination--that to deal with this sense at all adequately almost amounts to the same thing as to deal with the <sup>1</sup>man as a whole and his work in its entirety."

In treating of Milton's senses, it appears to me that a strong emphasis should be placed on the consideration of his sense of sight: his gradually diminishing vision which reached total extinction in 1651 when he was only 43 years of age. The blindness in which he found himself took him away from the natural world and placed him into a supernatural realm. Strong writes of his blindness: "His ears became more attent to heavenly harmonies, his spiritual eyes were opened as the outward eyes were closed."<sup>2</sup> His blindness served to transport him from the visible world into an invisible one and gave him a 'God of Wisdom' to guide him in the composition of his great epic.

There are lovers of Milton who have felt that the poet must have been

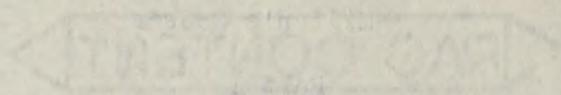
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1 Spurgeon, Caroline F. E., Shakespeare's Imagery, ch. 5, p 57

2 Strong, A. N., The Great Poets and Thier Theology, p 295



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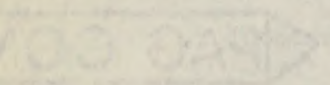


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exceptionally susceptible to the phenomena of illumination. Thomas Gray (1716-71) in his Pindaric Ode entitled the Progress of Poesy which abounds in reminiscences of Milton's diction, describes the wanderings of the Muses from Greece to Rome and thence into England. He praises Milton as the foremost poet of the English nation:

"No second He, that rode sublime  
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy  
The secrets of the Abyss to spy:  
He passed the flaming bound of Place and Time:  
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze  
Where angels tremble while they gaze,  
He saw; but blasted with excess of light,  
Closed his eyes in endless night."

1

William Thompson (1712-66), a poet now almost completely forgotten writes in a similar strain:

In Milton's Alcove

"Here, mighty Milton!..in the blaze of noon,  
Amid the broad effulgence, here I fix  
Thy radiant tabernacle. Nought is dark  
In thee, thou bright companion of the sun!  
Thus thy own Uriel in the centre stands  
Illustrious, waving glory round him! he  
Fairest archangel of all spirits in heaven,  
As of the sons of men the greatest thou."

2

Professor Masson comments on the influence of Milton's blindness on his work, referring to it "as perhaps positively qualifying him for that kind of imagination and description of which five-sixths of the poem consists--the imagination and description of vast physical space, variously shaded and divided; of luminous orbs in quiet motion through the nocturnal deep; of luminous or else shadowy beings passing or repassing singly or in

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1 Gray, Thomas, The Progress of Poesy, ll 95 ff.

2 Thompson, William, Garden Inscriptions, Anderson's British Poets, London 1795, Vol. 10, p 933





battalians; of contrasts of light and darkness in all their forms...At all events, much even of the subsidiary and terrestrial imagery of the poem will be found to consist of light and darkness worked cunningly into visual contrast;..."<sup>1</sup>

Heinrich Mutschmann, a disciple of S. B. Liljegren, the Swedish leader of the new European school of thought regarding Milton, takes these circuituous hints by the above and other Miltonian critics as a cue for the development of the theory that Milton was albinotic, and pushes this theory to an erratic extreme, even appealing to specialists in medicine for the support of his theory. He 'discovered' that Milton suffered from Photophobia, dread of light..."however sensitive he seems to have been to light, he yet shunned it, to move about in the dark."<sup>2</sup> According to Mutschmann this fact was not discovered before, because albinism as an organic disease was unknown to Milton's contemporaries.

Mutschmann claims that Milton as an albino, must have been suffering from a constant dread of light as long as he retained his power of vision. The problem of illumination must have been occupying his mind without remission. This state of his mind could not but find expression in his literary production: "An artist cannot help revealing himself in his works, for self expression is the very essence of art. It is by expressing what occupies and troubles him that an author finds temporary relief. In this manner, all the desires, fears, and longings which fill his mind to overflowing find their way into his works."<sup>3</sup> He believes that in the works

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1 Masson, David, Life of Milton, p 30

2 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, Dorpat 1925, Ch. IV, p 6

3 Ibid





of Milton belonging to the period before his sight was impaired by glaucoma, it is the ideas connected with the contrast between light and shade, and with everything related to this complex, that are "overweighted or overcharged".<sup>1</sup>

Mutschmann studies the poetry of Milton in its chronological order of composition. He attempts to show, through an impressive array of 'selected' Miltonian imagery, the significance of the influence of Milton's poor vision upon his poetic imagery. He tries to prove that his imagery reflects a complete change in his imaginative concepts after he becomes blind.

According to Mutschmann, Satan seems to have been the only figure in whose treatment Milton was able to display his Photophobia without restraint, and to express at the same time his own sense of despair and craving for self-assertion. Satan has been identified with Milton before, though on other grounds. He informs us: "It is no less certain that his intellectual might, his unbroken energy, his sedate and God-like patience, his calm dependence on himself amid overwhelming sorrows from without, the Titanic form of Satan, is a mask through which we see the face and hear the speech of Milton's self."<sup>2</sup>

Mutschmann believes that Milton identified himself with Satan only as long as his Photophobia lasted, i.e., until he lost his sight. He claims that Milton in his introduction to the third book clearly refers to the change in his attitude:

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1 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, Dorpat 1925, Ch. 4, p 32

2 Ibid

at fifteen belonging to the period between the two world wars  
it is the only one which has been published in the United States  
and which is the only one which has been published in the United States  
it is the only one which has been published in the United States

the book is a collection of the most important papers of the  
author, and it is the only one which has been published in the United States  
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"Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!  
 Or of the Eternal coeternal beam  
 May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,  
 And never but in unapproached light  
 Dwelt in eternity--dwelt then in thee.  
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate!  
 Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the Sun,  
 Before the Heavens, thou wert, and at the voice  
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest  
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
 Won from the void and formless Infinite!  
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,  
 Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained  
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,  
 Through utter and through middle Darkness borne,  
 With other notes than to the Orphean lyre  
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night  
 Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend  
 Though hard and rare..." 1

Now the poet is blind, the light no longer causes him pain, and he  
 can sing its praises. The light no longer visits his eyes:

"...Thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain  
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn..." 2

Further down the third book he exclaims:

"Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name  
 Shall be the copious matter of my song  
 Henceforth..." 3

Thus Mutschmann claims the introduction to the third book clearly  
 defines the boundary line dividing the period of Photophobia from that  
 of blindness.

I have stated earlier that the image reveals the "inner-man"--this

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 1-21  
 2 Ibid 21-24  
 3 Ibid 412-414





it does in a circuituous manner. The word-pictures which the author uses to make concrete the mental image are the means--the tools--which make the analysis of the author's background possible. Mutschmann resorts to the image as the tool for his study of Milton's "albinism".

The "new school" displays skillfully the imagery of Milton to substantiate their theory of Milton's albinism. However, it appears to me that there is a sharp cleavage in the thinking of Miltonian scholars concerning this belief. A. Stern roundly criticized Mutschmann's approach;<sup>1</sup> Gustav Hubeneer wrote a caustic denunciation of Mutschmann's conclusions;<sup>2</sup> Saurat<sup>3</sup> drew upon the writings of many contemporaries of Milton and many of the modern writers to denounce this erratic interpretation of Milton's nearsightedness as 'myopia due to albinism, probably caused by consanguinity of his grandparents'--with the opinion that he believed Milton's blindness was probably due to hereditary syphilis. Lord Macaulay states that though Milton wrote Paradise Lost at a time in life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and moral world. I quote Macaulay directly: "Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains."<sup>4</sup> His conception of love "writes all the voluptuousness of an Oriental harem, and all the

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1 Stern, A., In Frankfurter Zeitung, May 23, 1920, Literaturblatt.

2 Hubeneer, Milton-der Albino, in E.S., 1920, LIV, 473-77

3 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, Appendix B., no. 67, p 349

4 Lord Macaulay, The Genius and Character of Milton, Delisser and Procter, N. Y. p 200





gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection<sup>1</sup> of an English fireside." His poetry reminds us of "the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy-land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations."<sup>2</sup> The roses and myrtles "bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche."<sup>3</sup> These are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet.

In considering the tendency by Milton toward light and shade and his 'preoccupation with it to the exclusion of colors', we must refer to the statistics compiled by Mr. V. P. Squires which appear decisive on this point.<sup>4</sup> Milton mentions in his works twenty-nine different shades of color; he could, therefore distinguish them. Of these colors, those named most frequently are: gold, forty seven times; green, forty three times; red and its varieties, nineteen times; violet, thirteen times; gray, twelve times; blue, thirteen times; the other shades occur much less often. Now, these are the normal colors of nature; the gold of the sun, the red, gold, and violet of sunrise and sunset, the green of vegetation, the blue of the sky, the grey of somber days, of the earth, and of cities. Milton, therefore, saw the colors about him in a normal manner. He also saw colors at a distance. The following description of a sunset and moonrise bears out the point:

"...The sun now fall'n  
Beneath th' Azores; whither the prime Orb,  
Incredible how swift, had thither rowl'd  
Diurnal, or this less volubil Earth  
By shorter flight to th' East, had left him there  
Arraying with reflected Purple and Gold

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1 Lord Macaulay, The Genius and Character of Milton, Delisser & Procter, p 200

2 Ibid

p 201

3 Ibid

4 Squires, V. P., Modern Language Notes, December, Section VII, pp 465-66





The clouds that on his Western Throne attend:  
 Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
 Had in her sober Liverie all things clad:  
 Silence accompanied, for Beast and Bird,  
 They to thir grassie Couch, these to thir Nests  
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful Nightingale;  
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the Firmament  
 With living Saphirs: Hesperus that led  
 The starrie Host, rode brightest, till the Moon  
 Rising in clouded Majestie, at length  
 Apparent Queen unvaild her peerless light,  
 And o're the dark her Silver Mantle threw..." 1

Saurat insists that this "ability to see colors precisely and at a distance tells strongly against the hypothesis of myopia...Myopia of the aggravated type that results in blindness does not ordinarily allow its victims to distinguish so well the numerous shades of color which Milton<sup>2</sup> mentions." Both Saurat and Mutschmann concur on the point that twilight and dawn were his favorite hours for work. He studied, no doubt, by the light of candles, but even so, he could have experienced no difficulty in reading at these times of day.

Thus the antagonists of the Mutschmann theory discard the hypothesis of pernicious myopia and albinism and declare that the more plausible deduction concerning the cause of Milton's visual difficulties and eventual blindness was hereditary syphilis. This group, too, scrutinizes the writings of the poet; makes a close study of literature containing descriptions of and references to Milton, his life, his family background, etc., to buttress its conclusions.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 591-609

2 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, Appendix B. no. 67, p 335





It is of interest to note that Milton used the word sight 96 times in Paradise Lost. The word light is another he employed with great frequency, therefore, it appears, that he was concerned about his failing sight and consciously and unconsciously made reference to it.

In Book Three he bemoans his blindness and compares himself to the blind poets of the past:

"Thus with the Year  
Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of Even or Morn  
Or sight of vernal blooms, or Summer Rose  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me."

1

We observe that Milton makes an image of God in 'human face divine'.

Milton calls upon:

"thou Celestial light  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers  
Irradiate, thir plant eyes, all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

2

Satan in his address to the sun tells us:

"O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,  
Look'st from thy sole Dominion like the God  
Of this new World: at whose sight all the Starrs  
Hide thir diminisht heads."

3

Book Four tells us of "all trees of noblest kind of sight" (4.217) found in Eden; of "living creatures new to sight;" (4.287), of "sight hateful, sight tormenting" (4.505) with which Satan describes the happy couple in Eden. He tells of the "inmost seat of mental sight," (11.418).

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1 Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 40-46

2 Ibid 51-55

3 Ibid Bk IV, ll 32-35





Thus, his references to sight are too numerous to mention here. However, before moving on to his other senses I would like to remark that to Milton, God and light go together. He describes Hell as "the seat of desolation void of light," (2.137). Milton tells us poetically of "communicating male and female light," (8. 150); of the "Evening Star on his Hill top, to light the bridal Lamp, (8.520); of returning "up to the coasts of light," (8.245); and of "Morn," who "with Rosy hand unbarred the gates of light", (6.2-4). Light represents goodness; darkness represents evil.





## Part II

### Hearing

Concerning Milton's hearing, there can be little need to submit any varied detailed evidence of the sensitiveness of his ear, or of his real musical knowledge, both theoretical and technical. It is not strange that music should play a large role in his imaginative work. His father, a well-to-do notary, was a musician of considerable talent, and he in turn encouraged his son to study music. During the five-year period of his academic seclusion in the home of his father, at Norton, directly after his retirement from Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1632, Newton tells us that Milton "Now and then made an excursion into London, sometimes to buy books or to meet friends from Cambridge, and at other times to learn something new in mathematics or music, with which he was extremely delighted." These lessons were in the nature of coaching, 'advice and consultation' which shows that he must have acquired some degree of proficiency in music.<sup>1</sup>

In Paradise Lost Milton makes only three direct statements containing the word music, nevertheless he employs images from music too many times to be more than mentioned here. He uses with particularly effective results the musical sounds of instruments, of voices, of birds, of the very universe to amplify or buttress his ideas. The intonations of their sounds reflect sympathetically the momentary moods of Milton's imagination. Thus when he wishes to bestir the broken spirits of Satan's badly pummeled forces he points his imaginative baton to the trumpet at the

---

1 Newton, Thomas, The Life of John Milton in Paradise Lost, A Poem in 12 Books, p 5





proper psychological moment. At the sound of the 'sonorous mettall blowing martial sounds' Satan's hordes are so stirred that they:

"Upsent  
A shout that tore Hell's Concave, and beyond  
Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night." 1

He compares the construction of Pandemonium to:

"...an Organ from one blast of wind  
To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breathes.  
Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge  
Rose like an Exhalation with the sound  
Of Dulcet symphonies and voices sweet..." 2

However sympathetic Milton may be to Satan's 'cause' he must not allow him to outdo God. On the occasion of the great battle in Heaven the 'Messiah's' forces employed militant music too:

"Nor with less dread the loud  
Ethereal Trumpet from on high gan blow;  
At which command the Powers Militant  
That stood for Heav'n, in mighty Quadrate joyn'd  
Of Union irresistible, mov'd on  
In silence thir bright Legions, to the sound  
Of instrumental Harmonie that breath'd  
Heroic Ardor to advent'rous deeds." 3

He is sensitive to the tone and timber of the voice and he employs it constantly throughout his epic.

He reveals the limitless authority of God's spoken word:

"Silence, ye troubl'd waves, and thou Deep, peace,  
Said th' Omnific Word, your discord end;" 4

"..in Paternal glorie rode  
Farr into Chaos, and the World unborn;  
For Chaos heard his voice:" 5

- 
- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 541-43  
2 Ibid 707-712  
3 Ibid Bk VI, ll 58-65  
4 Ibid Bk VII, ll 216-17  
5 Ibid 219-21





He also shows the power and effectiveness of Satan's voice:

"He stood and called his legions"... 1

"...He called so loud, that all the hollow Deep  
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
Warriors, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now lost..." 2

"...Wake, arise, or be forever fall'n..." 3

"They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when wont to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves are well awake.  
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their General's Voyce they soon obeyd  
Innumerable..." 4

At the end of the speech to his 'fallen angels' he uses words that  
have echoed through speeches of 'diplomats' the world over, many  
times since:

"...Peace is despaired,  
For who can think Submission! Warr then, Warr  
Open or understood must be resolv'd.  
He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew  
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
Of mighty Cherubim;..." 5

He tells us Adam's voice is:

"...Milde, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes..." 6

When Satan dismisses his followers at the end of their great council  
they:

"...Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
Forbidding..." 7

- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Milton, <u>Paradise Lost</u> , Bk I, ll 300 |
| 2 | Ibid 312-314                                |
| 3 | Ibid 330                                    |
| 4 | Ibid 331-348                                |
| 5 | Ibid 660-665                                |
| 6 | Ibid Bk V, ll 16                            |
| 7 | Ibid Bk II, ll 474-475                      |

He said that the power and influence of the...

He then said that the power and influence...

"...he said so much, that all the people...

"...he said, that, on a future...

"They said, 'we were a very, very, very...  
Then the king, at that time, he said...  
On that, the king, he said, 'I will...  
And he said, 'I will, I will, I will...  
On his way, he said, 'I will, I will...  
In such a way, on the other hand, it was...  
For the king, he said, 'I will, I will...  
Immediately..."

At the end of the speech, the king said...

He then said that the power and influence...

After that...

"...he said, 'I will, I will, I will...  
For the king, he said, 'I will, I will...  
On the other hand, he said, 'I will, I will...  
He said, 'I will, I will, I will...  
The king of the world, he said, 'I will, I will...  
At that time, he said, 'I will, I will..."

He then said that the power and influence...

"...he said, 'I will, I will, I will..."

He then said that the power and influence...

...

"...he said, 'I will, I will, I will..."

Immediately...

---

1. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	1. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
2. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	2. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
3. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	3. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
4. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	4. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
5. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	5. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
6. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	6. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...
7. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...	7. King, he said, 'I will, I will, I will...



We may note the discrimination he makes between the voices of the various protagonists and antagonists in his great drama.

Milton is exceedingly conscious of sounds and employs them to represent many things. When he describes the reaction of Satan's hordes to Mammon's speech, he draws upon nature for his imagery:

"...such murmur filld  
Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain  
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
Sea-faring men are watcht, whose Bark by chance  
Or Pinnacle anchors in a craggy Bay.." 1

Milton describes:

"...Thir rising all at once was as the sound  
Of Thunder heard remote..." 2

Milton describes the serenity of morning in Eden. Adam awakes from his 'Aerie light' sleep:

"...Which th' only sound  
Of leaves and fuming rills...  
...and the shrill Matin' Song  
Of Birds on every bough;..." 3

Here, we notice, he also employs the song of birds. He has a choir of them constantly chirping gaily away in Eden.

There is a sharp contrast between the opening of the gates of Hell by Sin:

"... On a sudden op'n flie  
With empetuous recoile and jarring sound  
Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges grate  
Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
Of Erebus..." 4

- 
- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk II, ll 285-290  
2 Ibid 476-477  
3 Ibid Bk V, ll 5-8  
4 Ibid Bk II, ll 880-84





And the opening of Heaven's gates by 'Morn':

"...Morn  
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarred the gates of light..." 1

The general impression one gets on looking at Milton's sound images, apart from his general delight in music and extreme sensitiveness to voices, is that he associates the purest emotion and the most spiritual condition known to man with music and harmony.

"That heav'n would want spectators, God wants praise;  
Millions of spiritual Creatures walk the Earth  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
Both day and night: how often from the steep  
Of echoing Hill or Thicket have we heard  
Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
Sole, or responsive each to others note  
Singing thir great Creator: oft in bands  
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk  
With Heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds  
In full harmonic number joind, thir songs  
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven..." 2

In comparing the Angels' Mystical dance to the starrie Spheare of Planets, ('mazes intricate', 'regular-when most irregular they seem',) he describes heavenly music:

"And in thir motions harmonie Divine  
So smooths her charming tones, that Gods own ear  
Listens delighted." 3

The Morning Hymn of Praise which Adam and Eve offer up in concert to their Maker contains their loftiest thoughts and most reverent sentiments expressed in melodiously flowing verse:

---

1 Paradise Lost, Bk VI, ll 2-4  
2 Ibid IV, ll 677-89  
3 Ibid V, ll 625-27

And the speech of the speaker...

...with

...of the ...

The general impression...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

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...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

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In ...

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...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

1 ...

2 ...

3 ...



"Fairest of Starrs, last in the train of Night,  
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crownst the smiling Morn  
 With thy bright Circlet, praise him in thy Spheare  
 While day arises, that sweet hour of Prime.  
 Thou Sun, of this great World both Eye and Soule,  
 Acknowledge him thy Greater, sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st  
 With the fixt Starrs, fixt in thir Orb that flies,  
 And yee five other wandring Fires that move  
 In mystic Dance not without Song, resound  
 His praise, who out of Darkness call'd up Light." 1

Though Milton 'condoned' war, he most surely disliked it, and it is worth observing that the action of war is clearly associated in his mind chiefly with noise.

Those who like war and the soldier's life think of it in terms of sound and the association that particular sound brings with it. Raphael's description of the great war contains these war sounds:

"..Arms on Armour clashing brayd  
 Horrible discord, and the madding Wheelles  
 Of brazon Chariots rag'd; dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery Darts in flaming volies flew,  
 And flying vaulted either Host with fire.  
 So under fierie Cope together rush'd  
 Both Battels maine, with ruinous assault  
 And inextinguishable rage; all Heav'n  
 Resounded.." 2

Milton's description of Chaos also contains these war noises:

"...where eldest Night  
 And Chaos, Ancestors of Nature, hold  
 Eternal Anarchie, midst the noise  
 Of endless warrs, and by confusion stand.  
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions fierce  
 Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring  
 Thir embryon Atoms;..." 3

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk V, ll 166-79

2 Ibid VI, ll 209-218

3 Ibid II, ll 894-900





We are justified in concluding that as in Milton's imagination heaven and earth are hushed stillness, with touches of 'Aerial song', Hell and Chaos are places of 'Horrible discord', 'dreadful combustion', 'endless wars and noise', he very much loved the former and hated the latter.

I Milton, Paradise Lost, Book II, ll. 11-12

I 1111

I 1112

11-1, 11 117

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## Part III

## Smell

Milton has clearly a very acute sense of smell and is particularly fond of pleasant smells. His descriptions of Eden abound in references to pleasant 'odours'. Upon his arrival in Eden the 'Fiend' enjoyed the 'odorous sweets' he found there:

"...now gentle gales  
Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense  
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole  
Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who sail  
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
Mozambic, off at Sea North-East winds blow  
Sabeian Odours from the spicie shoare  
Of Arabie the blest, with such delay  
Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League  
Cheard with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.  
So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend..." 1

Milton employs personification in further description of Eden:

"Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gunms and Balme." 2

As far as one can judge from images, Milton seems more sensitive to the allure of fragrant smells than to the horror of bad ones. Hell is  
3  
'all involv'd with stench and smoak.'

In Book Ten, Sin and Death decide to follow the trail of Satan. Milton alludes to Death as a vulture eager to devour the flesh of dead soldiers:

"...thou leading, such a sent I draw  
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste  
The savour of Death from all things there that live:  
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 156-166

2 Ibid 248

3 Ibid Bk I, ll 237





Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid  
So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell  
Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock  
Of ravenous Fowl, though many a League remote,  
Against the day of Battel, to a Field,  
Where Armies lie encampt, come flying, lur'd  
With sent of living Carcasses design'd  
For death, the following day, in bloodie fight.  
So sented the grim Feature, and upturn'd  
His Nostril wide into the murkie Air,  
Sagacious of his Quarry from so farr..." 1

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## Part IV

## Touch

Milton is acutely aware of the sense of touch and makes constant reference to the word itself. (This may be observed in his treatment of the temptation of Adam and Eve in which he employs ingeniously all five senses). He frequently combines his musical sense with his sense of touch to draw out his analogies.

In his analogy between Satan's 'perfect Phalanx' and the 'Hero's old' he describes the Dorian Mood of the Flutes and soft Recorders which raised to 'hight of Noblest temper' their spirits.

He employs touch in the musical sense as a musical note or strain:

"Swage with solemn touches troubled thought." 1

He reveals the action of the hand on a musical instrument when the millions of spiritual creatures on Earth sing praise to God:

"...oft in bands  
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk  
With Heavenly touch of instrumental sounds..." 2

In Book XI, Milton tells us of the peculiar manner in which a player uses his organ:

"...Thir stops and chords was seen: his volant touch  
Instinct through all proportions low and high  
Fled and persu'd transverse the resonant fugue..." 3

On the 'Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth', the Celestial Quires:

"...With joy and shout  
The hollow Universal Orb they fill'd,  
And touch't thir Golden Harps..." 4

- 
- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, l 557  
 2 Ibid Bk VIII, ll 686-684  
 3 Ibid Bk XI, ll 556-558  
 4 Ibid Bk VII, ll 256-58





He presents a suggestion with a sense of touch:

"To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame (to) Eve." 1

Throughout Paradise Lost Milton employs touch in the sense of being or coming into physical contact with. Morn approaches and Adam awakes Eve:

"Her hand soft touching, whispered thus, Awake  
My fairest..." 2

Satan is discovered skulking in the Garden of Eden by the Angel guards and Milton describes the 'Touch of Celestial temper':

"Him thus intent Ithuriel with his Speare  
Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure  
Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
Of force to his own likeness." 3

Milton creates a metaphor of the rays of the sun:

"...till toucht  
With beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light." 4

We see a blending of the senses in Eve's daily toil:

"...her Fruits and Flours,  
To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,  
Her Nurserie; they at her coming sprung  
And toucht by her fair tendrance gladlier grew..." 5

Touch is used in the abstract sense by Eve:

"...by what thy own last reasoning words  
Touch'd onely, that our trial, when least sought,  
May finde us both perhaps farr less prepar'd..." 6

Throughout the epic the sense of touch is applied to the forbidden

- 
- |                                  |                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Milton, <u>Paradise Lost</u> , | Bk IX, ll 1143    |
| 2 Ibid                           | Bk V, l 17        |
| 3 Ibid                           | Bk IV, ll 810-813 |
| 4 Ibid                           | Bk VI, ll 479-481 |
| 5 Ibid                           | Bk VIII, ll 44-47 |
| 6 Ibid                           | Bk IX, ll 379-381 |





Tree of Knowledge. During the temptation, Eve tells the Serpent:

"..of this Tree we may not taste nor touch." 1

Thus we see that the sense of touch is an important one to Milton and to Paradise Lost and its importance is revealed in his treatment of the 'temptation scene' of Adam and Eve.

Thus Milton tells us of 'the Touch of Celestial temper', (4.812), of 'texture of soft showers fragrant the fertile earth' (4.645), of the 'washie ooze' (7.300), 'Temper'd soft turnings' (7.598), the 'touch of blame' (9.1143), 'touch whereby mankind is propagated' (8.579), and of the heavenly spirits he inquires of their touch causing a 'smile that glowed Celestial rosie red' (8.618-619). He is aware of the sense itself and uses it masterfully during the tempting of Eve.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IX, l 651





## Part V

## Taste

Concerning taste, it appears to me that there is no evidence in Milton's images of any delicate or discriminating palate. His taste images are general in scope and would suffer by comparison with those of Shakespeare. Since he preached 'continence' in body, it appears only natural that he would recommend and practise moderation in the consumption of food.

In Book Seven, he warns us to 'beware and govern well the appetite'.<sup>1</sup> Adam informs Eve that knowledge is as food and needs no less temperance over appetite to know in measure what the mind may well contain.

In Book Nine, Eve tells the Serpent:

"...of this fair Tree  
God hath said. Ye shall not eate  
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die." 2

The two senses are presented together throughout the poem. However, he frequently cites sight, smell, and taste in his descriptions of trees and fruits:

"Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow  
All Trees of Noblest Kind for sight, smell, taste." 3

He describes the Tree of Life:

"...blooming Ambrosial Fruit  
Of vegetable Gold." 4

The word ambrosial is mythology's 'meat of the gods'. 5

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk VII, l 546

2 Ibid IX, 662-63

3 Ibid IV, 216-17

4 Ibid IV, 219-20

5 Osgood, Chas. G., Classical Mythology in Milton, The Sources, p 6





Milton describes the simple dinner the loving pair partakes of:

"Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd  
For dinner savourie fruits, of taste to please  
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
Of nectarous draughts between, from milkie stream,  
Berrie or Grape."1

However simple the repast, Milton employs food and taste for the construction of an elaborate analogy through which he expresses a point of religious philosophy:

"...what he gives  
...to man in part  
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found  
No ingrateful food: ...and both contain  
Within them every lower facultie  
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste  
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,  
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.  
For know, whatever was created, needs  
To be sustained and fed, of Elements  
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,  
Earth and the Sea feed Air, the air those Fires  
Ethereal, and as lowest first the Moon;  
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd  
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd."2

"The Sun that light imparts to all, recieves  
From all his alimential recompence  
In humid exhalations, and at Even  
Supps with the Ocean:"3

It is interesting to note that throughout Paradise Lost Milton derives great pleasure out of describing the good and delicate in food, yet, he reserves his strongest feeling for his description of Eve, devouring carnivorously the fruit of death.

In concluding this analysis of Milton's senses I should like to focus

- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 303-307  
2 Ibid Bk V, ll 404-420  
3 Ibid 223-226

Elton was not a native of the United States.

He was born in the United States, but he was not a native of the United States. He was born in the United States, but he was not a native of the United States.

However, Elton was not a native of the United States.

Consequently, Elton was not a native of the United States.

of religious education.

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It is interesting to note that the United States

...and he was

...and he was

...and he was

In conclusion, this analysis of Elton's career is

Elton, United States, 1911, 1912-1913

1914, 1915, 1916-1917

1918, 1919, 1920-1921



the readers attention upon Milton's treatment of the temptation. We observe that Satan uses all five senses to coerce his unsuspecting victim into bringing death unto mankind.

Book Four reveals Satan's discovery of Adam and Eve's 'Achilles Heel':

"...all is not theirs it seems:  
One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call'd,  
Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd'n?  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord  
Envie them that? can it be sin to know,  
Can it be death? and do they onely stand  
By Ignorance, is that thir happie state,  
The proof of thir obedience and thir faith?  
O fair foundation laid whereon to build  
Thir ruine! Hence I will excite thir minds  
With more desire to know, and to reject  
Envious commands,..."

1

The Serpent approaches Eve and with a glib, flattering tongue implants the first seed of discontent in her heart:

"Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine  
By gift, and thy Celestial Beautie adore  
With ravishment beheld, there best behold  
Where universally admir'd: but here  
In this enclosure wild, these Beasts among,  
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern  
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,  
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen  
A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd  
By Angels numberless, thy daily Train."

2

He continues in this vein and fascinates her with his flattery.

A good salesman knows that in order to sell his product he must catch his clients attention and arouse his interest. The next step is the exhibition of the product. This technique Satan is well aware of. He has completed the first two steps and moves on to the third:

---

1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 513-524  
2 Ibid IX, ll 539-548





"Empress, the way is readie, and not long,  
Beyond a row of Myrtles, on a Flat,  
Fast by a Fountain, one small Thicket past  
Of blowing Myrrh and Balme; if thou accept  
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.

Lead then, said Eve."

1

Poor Eve--little does she realize that this was her first step down  
the ladder to undoing and Hell.

Satan leads Eve within sight of the object and his objective. Eve  
squirms a little under his verbal assault:

"God hath said, Ye shall not eate  
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, least ye die."

2

She has been drawn to the bait, now she must be led to bite--this is  
no mean task. However, Satan rises in eloquence above the great orators  
of Athens and Rome. He tells her that it is envy in 'heavenly breasts'  
which forbids the eating of the fruit:

"...these and many more  
Causes import your need of this fair Fruit  
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste."

3

Very nature seems to conspire against "poor Eve".

"..The hour of Noon drew on, and wak'd  
An eager appetite, raised by the smell  
So savorie of that Fruit, which with desire,  
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,"

4

Satan's salestalk has sunk in. She is thinking things over. Hunger,  
the sight of the luscious fruit, the fragrance--glory!

"...what hinders then  
To reach, and feed at once both Bodie and Mind?  
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour  
Forth reaching to the Fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Milton, <u>Paradise Lost</u> , Bk IX, ll 626-631 |
| 2 | Ibid 62-63                                       |
| 3 | Ibid 730-732                                     |
| 4 | Ibid 739-742                                     |

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Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat  
Sighing through all her Works gave signs of woe,  
That all was lost. Back to the Thicket slunk  
The guiltie Serpent, and well might, for Eve  
Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else  
Regarded, such delight till then, as seemed,  
In Fruit she never tasted, whether true  
Or fancied so, through expectation high  
Of knowledge, nor was God-head from her thought.  
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,  
And knew not eating Death:.. " 1

We witness the successful completion of Satan's first mission of his war against the Creator. By employing the senses he dupes Man into becoming an innocent pawn in his war of eternal vengeance against God. Thus Milton presents sensuality as an agent in the fall of Man.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IX, ll 778-792







CHAPTER IV

Sources of Liberty:  
Society and Christian



## Chapter IV

### Sources of Imagery:

#### Hebraic and Christian

In treating Milton's imagery in *Paradise Lost* we must not overlook its sources. I have already made a general reference to these sources in a preceeding chapter but, nevertheless, it appears necessary for us to scrutinize them a little in detail in order that we be enabled to associate these images more readily with his vast background and identify a few of the more subtle implications with which this background affects his images. In my previous reference I suggested that Milton's images are drawn in the main from books and from nature. Let us consider the Hebraic and Christian (book) sources of his imagery for the moment since they are the very foundation upon which Milton constructed his great epic.

I will attempt to tie some of these sources in with specific examples of imagery in order to show the direct relationship between them. Since the image is the culmination of the thinking of a poet: the ideas he carries in the back of his mind, it will be of value to probe into his ideas and trace the image to its point of conception.

B. Ifor Evens states: "The end and aim of the synthetic act of analysis is to seize from the inside of the creative mood of the writer; the complex of emotions and ideas that lies at the core of the work, and from which it originated. This is not merely to divine a purpose, an artistic intent; it is to possess oneself of the very growth and expansion of the purpose into  
1  
an accomplished reality." Here we have history indeed, but the inner

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1 Evens, B. Ifor, Essays and Studies by Members of the English Assoc. Vol. XVI, p 28

## Chapter IV

## Sources of Imagery

## Hebraic and Christian

In treating Milton's imagery in Paradise Lost we must not overlook its sources. I have already made a general reference to Milton's sources in the preceding chapter but, nevertheless, it appears necessary for us to scrutinize them a little in detail in order that we be enabled to recognize those images more readily with new backgrounds and identify a few of the more subtle implications with which this distinguished subject has endowed. In my previous reference I suggested that Milton's imagery is drawn in the main from books and from nature. Let us consider the Hebraic and Christian (poet) sources of his imagery for the moment since they are the very foundation upon which Milton constructed his poetic edifice. I will attempt to give some of these sources in this special analysis of imagery in order to show the direct relationship between them. Since the issue is the relationship of the imagination to a poet's ideas, I cannot in the face of the fact, it will be of value to show how his ideas are traced to their point of conception.

E. H. Rieu writes of Milton: "The mind and aim of the poet are not of analysis in to make from the depths of the creative mind a new world; the complex of emotions and ideas that flow at the very heart of the work, and from which it originated. This is not merely to divide a subject, an artistic intent; it is to possess oneself of the very growth and expansion of the subject into an unbroken reality." Here we have history, fact, and the inner



history of a mind, which has obeyed the promptings of self expression.

Before we delve into the problem of tracing and analyzing the literary sources of Milton's Paradise Lost, let us consider the genetic impulse from which this epic arose.

In 1618, when Milton was ten years of age, he wrote verses which were considered marvelous in his home circle. His father was so impressed by them that Milton was henceforth brought up deliberately to be a man of genius. Milton, in turn, from early childhood, came to accept the idea of his genius. Thus, his greatness was taken for granted, even by himself. With his father's encouragement, he applied himself to rigorous daily study and preparation for the great role he was to play.

At nineteen, in a college exercise, Milton binds himself by his first oaths to his future Muse:

"Hail, Native language...  
 Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,  
 Thy service in some greater subject use...  
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar  
 Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door  
 Look in, and see such blissful deity  
 How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,  
 Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings...  
 Then sing of secret things that came to pass  
 When beldam Nature in her cradle was..."

1

The idea of a great work is already manifesting itself. Though the subject of Paradise Lost is not yet found, the plans are drawn: the poet foresees vaguely a universal epic, describing the origin of the world and revealing the secret aims and occupations of divinity. Saurat tells us of his subject choice: "His subject is inevitable; he is driven by the great

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1 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, p 10

history of a man, which has shaped the growth of his life. Before he came into the world of science and industry, he was a man of letters, but he was not a man of letters from which this was.

In 1811, when Linton was a boy of six, his father, who was a constant presence in his home, died. His father was an important man in the world of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was. Linton, in fact, was a man of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was. Linton, in fact, was a man of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was.

With his father's encouragement, he applied himself to the study of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was. Linton, in fact, was a man of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was. Linton, in fact, was a man of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was.

...and, having learned...  
 Yes, I had learned, it was to be...  
 The service in the world of letters...  
 Such were the reports of his...  
 above the world of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was. Linton, in fact, was a man of letters, and he was a man of letters from which this was.

The story of a man is a story of his life. The story of a man is a story of his life. The story of a man is a story of his life. The story of a man is a story of his life. The story of a man is a story of his life.



force of his sublime pride (nurtured in him since childhood by his father) to the largest and deepest theme imaginable: what else can he sing but the All, the World, the Gods? The compass of his genius is that of the whole  
1  
Cosmos; he cannot choose a smaller object."

In 1632, he retired to Horton, where with the full approval of his father, he devoted himself to deliberate preparation for his high mission. A few years later he wrote to a friend (Deodati): "Do you ask what I am  
2  
meditating? By the help of Heaven, an immortality of fame."

Mutschmann believes that Milton had originally planned (prior to his first attack of glaucoma in 1644) to write a drama on the Temptation and Fall, "of which Books IV and IX may contain fragments. The famous ten lines in the beginning of Bk IV are said, by Edward Phillips, Milton's  
3  
nephew, to have been designed for the very beginning of the said tragedy."

"O thou that with surpassing Glory crowned,  
Lookst from thy sole Dominion like the God  
Of this new World; at whose sight all the Starrs  
Hide thir diminisht heads; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams  
That bring to my remembrance from what state  
I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;  
Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down  
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless King:" 4

It was Milton's Italian journey in 1638 that apparently created in him the intention to write an epic poem in the style of certain recent Italian poets, such as Ariosto and Tasso. Mutschmann suggests that Milton at first thought of the legendary figure of Brutus, founder of the British

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1 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, p 10

2 Ibid

3 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, p 63

4 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 32-41





nation (Epitaphium Damonos ll 161-178), and of King Arthur (cp Mansus, ll 80-84) as suitable subjects...this plan had to be abandoned because it was found impossible to frame the plot so as to allow the author to remain in a suitable illumination all the time.<sup>1</sup> In the end, Milton returned to the story of Satan, which he had already treated in his Latin poem on the Fifth of November and to which the story of the demon Comus bears great affinity, the scheme of which would be laid almost entirely in the Supernatural World, which would describe the age-long war between God and Satan,

"..assert eternal Providence  
And justify the ways of God to men,"<sup>2</sup>

All through Paradise Lost the identity of Milton is seen--his fine hand presents his own thoughts and ideals as he wanted them to be presented. "It is Milton's Paradise Lost, Lost by Milton's Adam and Eve, who are tempted by Milton's Satan, and punished by Milton's God. The stamp of his clear hard imagination is on the whole fabric."<sup>3</sup>

In reference to the 'genetic impulse', if Cromwell had succeeded in organizing a true Kingdom of God, Milton would have again become a literary man in search of a subject, instead of being an Apostle preaching a Faith. Perhaps a Paradise Lost would have been written, but the poem would have been essentially different. It would have been a splendid song of triumph, no doubt, but somewhat superfluous. The failure of all the terrestrial hopes of the Puritans made something more of Paradise Lost. Disaster gave

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1 Mutschmann, Heinrich, The Secret of John Milton, p 63

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, ll 25-26

3 Raleigh, Sir Walter, Milton, p 87





to the poem that vital and impassioned interest which makes of it more than a work of art, the ultimate question of man interrogating destiny. This it is that places Paradise Lost so high in human consciousness: it is an attempt to give a precise answer to a metaphysical question which arises both from personal anguish and universal suffering. It is a voice singing of mankind at a loss to understand its repeated failures in its struggle against Fate.

Saurat suggests that "...Paradise Lost is first of all...the working out of Milton's ideas, but it is also...a sort of transposition of his private and political experience."<sup>1</sup>

Satan's character, as Milton presents it, cannot but inspire feelings of sympathy and admiration. The traditional motive of Satan's fall was pride. Milton had then to describe the pride of Satan. But, as we have seen, pride was the ruling passion in his own soul. Consequently, the character of Satan is drawn with a power unique in literature. In reality, Milton pours out his own feelings. Satan's first speeches are pure Miltonic lyricism. For, in addition, Milton's pride had known defeat, even as Satan's had. What matters failure and the triumph of the enemy if one is resolved not to submit? Here we have the rage and defiance which Milton himself felt when he saw the Restoration coming. He expressed himself vehemently through prose in his "Ready and Easy Way".<sup>2</sup> Saurat suggests that Milton began work on the epic about 1658--the time just prior to the ascension of Charles II, the time of his pugnacious prose work--and that

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<sup>1</sup> Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, p 213

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 99





he expressed the same feelings in verse:

"...yet not for those  
 Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict do I repent or change,  
 Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind  
 And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,  
 That with the mightiest raid'd me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd  
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd  
 In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,  
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?  
 All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,  
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome?  
 That Glory never shall his wrath or might  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deifie his power  
 Who from the terrour of this Arm so late  
 Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
 This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods  
 And this Emphyreal substance cannot fail,  
 Since through experience of this great event  
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage by force or guile eternal Warr  
 Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n." 1

No one is vanquished who remains strong in his spirit.

"Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable  
 Doing or Suffering." 2

In hiding at the Restoration, Milton remembers all his dreams of what the Kingdom of the Saints was to have been and sees the reign of Belial in London itself:

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 94-124

2 Ibid 157-58







"In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns  
 And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse  
 Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,  
 And injury and outrage: And when Night  
 Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons  
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine." 1

When Beelzebub cries:

"..The mind and spirit remain  
 Invincible," 2

he expresses the invincible spirit of the great Puritans.

Saurat tells us that Satan is not the hero of Paradise Lost: "he is intellectually condemned, in spite of all the poet's--and the reader's sympathy. Since neither Christ nor God nor Adam is a fitting counterpart for Satan, Milton has been charged with having no hero, or with having an evil one. The charge, apparently well founded--and artistically, too, perhaps--is groundless psychologically. Milton has not felt a lack of equilibrium between the powers of good and the powers of evil because, in fact, there is in Paradise Lost a greater character than Satan, an adversary of the Adversary. The hero of Paradise Lost is Milton himself." 3

The myth of the Fall, which stands as the central idea of Paradise Lost has its roots sunk deeply in Hebraic and Christian religious dogma. Milton drew from the Fathers, Hebraic and early Christian sources, and St. Augustine. Before this epic was completed this central thought had become associated and suffused with images drawn from the far corners of the earth and from the sky and its celestial bodies.

Saurat suggests that Milton's thought is essentially original...

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, 497-502

2 Ibid 139-140

3 Saurat, Dennis, Milton Man & Thinker, pp 219-220





"although he has expressed only ideas which were correct before him, and around him in certain circles, yet he has never accepted any ideas from  
<sup>1</sup>  
 the outside."

"...we possess, as it were a twofold Scripture; one external, which is the written word, and the other internal which is the Holy Spirit...that which is internal, and the peculiar possession of each believer, is far  
<sup>2</sup>  
 superior to all, namely the Spirit itself..."

This 'spirit' acted as a filter through which passed only those external suggestions which he judged acceptable. His personal experience changed his outlook on life, and this in turn decided what he would adopt or reject among the ideas brought forward by mankind. It is this same freedom of selectivity which amalgamated the ideas that later became the basis for his great poetic creation.

Mark Pattison writes of the Fall: "In Genesis it is the serpent who tempts Eve...in Milton it is Satan who has entered into the body of a serpent, and supplied the intelligence. Here indeed Milton was adopting a gloss, as ancient at least as the Wisdom of Solomon...But it is the gloss, and not the text of Moses, which is in possession of our minds, and  
<sup>3</sup>  
 who had done most to lodge it there, Milton or the commentators?"

Sir Walter Raleigh also says: "The Miltonic account of the Fall of the Angels...is not borrowed from the Fathers, but corresponds rather with the  
<sup>4</sup>  
 later version popularized in England by the cycles of Miracle Plays."

1 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 247

2 Prose Works, 447 (The Prose Works of Milton Selected (London 1893 Bohn Ed.))

3 Pattison, Mark, Milton, p 185

4 Ralieg, Sir Walter, Milton, p 99





Mr. John Bailey writes, "To this day if an ordinary man is asked to give his recollection of the story of Adam and Eve, he is sure to put Milton as well as Genesis into them. For instance, the Miltonic Satan is almost  
1  
sure to take the place of the Scriptural serpent."

"...with inspection deep  
Consider'd every Creature, which of all  
Most opportune might serve his Wiles, and found  
The Serpent subtlest Beast of all the Field.  
Him after long debate, irresolute  
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose  
Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of Fraud, in whom  
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide  
From sharpest sight: for in the wilie Snake,  
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,  
As from his wit and native subtletie  
Proceeding, which in other Beasts observ'd  
Doubt might beget of Diabolic pow'r  
Active within beyond the sense of brute." 2

In the above passage Satan selects the serpent.

Satan enters the serpent:

"...in at his Mouth  
The Devil entered, and his brutal sense,  
In heart or head, possessing soon inspir'd  
With act intelligential;..." 3

The position in which the serpent is usually remembered:

"In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward Eve  
Address'd his way, not with indented wave,  
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his reare,  
Circular base of rising foulds, that tour'd  
Fould above fould a surging Maze, his Head  
Crested aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes;  
With burnisht Neck of verdant Gold, erect  
Amidst his circling Spires, that on the grass  
Floted redundant: pleasing was his shape,  
And lovely,..." 4

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1 Bailey, John, Milton, (Home University Library, N.Y. 1915), p 143

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IX, ll 83-96

3 Ibid 186-190

4 Ibid 495-504





Thus the image of Satan in the form of a serpent which Milton has helped enter into the mind of the average person finds its source in dogma introduced by St. Augustine, and developed by Calvin in his commentary on the first chapter of Genesis.

In pursuing this study of the sources of the myth of the Fall (which includes both that of Man and the Angels) we must turn first to the Hebraic sources.

Milton had at his disposal the Polyglot Bible published by Walton in 1657 which allowed him contact with the primitive ideas of the Hebrews, the belief that the sufferings of life are the price paid for knowledge; and the price is worth paying; that man chose his lot, against God's will and warning. Saurat states: "Evidently Milton knew Walton personally; Walton had been curate in Milton's native street, Bread Street, in 1624, and a particular friend and former pupil of Milton's was one of Milton's<sup>1</sup> collaborators."

The aim of the tales on the fall of man among the ancient Hebrews seems to have been the investigation of the origin of suffering. The result of this investigation was the connecting of man's intelligence with his knowledge of good and evil. This knowledge they considered as good and desirable. They believed mankind went through a period of happiness both on earth and in Paradise, and was condemned to know both good and evil work and childbearing.

In Adam's own interest, the Divine will had forbidden him to acquire the knowledge of good and evil. Man wanted knowledge. Pride possessed

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<sup>1</sup> Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 251





him; he disobeyed and God was obliged to put down his pride by sending him tribulation. Saurat states that this idea "is one of the most  
1  
frequent themes of the prophets".

Milton was in sympathy with the old beliefs in thinking that the price paid for knowledge had not been too much, and he saw advantage in the Fall:

"Whether I should repent me now of sin  
By mee done and occasioned, or rejoyce  
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,  
To God more glory, more good will to Men.  
From God, and over wrauth grace shall abound." 2

The first record of Hebrew speculations on the fall of the angels is in Genesis 6.15-5. In this version the angels fall because of sensuality.

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God (angels) saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose..There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them...God saw that the wickedness of man was  
3  
great on earth."

Milton's version of the Fall of the Angels: In this primitive form of the myth, it is important to note that (1) the fall of the angels comes later than that of man; (2) the cause of the Angels' fall is sensuality; (3) the origin of evil is in the fall of the angels and not in that of man.

1 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 252

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk XII, ll 474-478

3 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 253

that in 1847, and was then obliged to go to a hospital, and  
that in 1848, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and  
that in 1849, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and

that in 1850, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and  
that in 1851, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and  
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that in 1870, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and

that in 1871, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and  
that in 1872, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and  
that in 1873, he was obliged to go to a hospital, and



"...his Pride  
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host  
 Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring  
 To set himself in Glory above his Peers,  
 He trusted to have equal'd the most High,  
 If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim  
 Against the Throne and Monarchy of God  
 Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud  
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie..." 1

A fragment of the Book of Enoch, written about the second or first century B.C. also contained a version of the Fall most of which Milton didn't accept. However, Azazel, who is found in Enoch, is used by Milton in Paradise Lost.

"Then straight commands that at warlike sound  
 Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd  
 His mighty standard; that proud honour claim'd  
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;  
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd  
 Th' imperial ensign; which, full advanced,  
 Shone like a meteor streaming in the wind,  
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd." 2

Azazel supposedly dealt with men's weapons in "Enoch". Thus he was the maker of the 'imperial ensign' and this gave him the privilege to carry it--'as his right'.

Milton describes Enoch in Book XI:

"...till at last,  
 Of middle age one rising, eminent  
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
 Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,  
 And judgement from above: him old and young  
 Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,  
 Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence,  
 Unseen amid the throng: so violence  
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found." 3

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 35-45

2 Ibid 531-38

3 Ibid 660-69





Milton concurs with Enoch on the part of the myth which used sensuality as a motive in the angels fall. However, he rejects the idea that the 'sons of God' were angels, since his angels had to fall before man did.

"...that sober race of men, whose lives  
Religious titl'd them the sons of God." 1

In the Fifth Book of Paradise Lost, Milton forgets himself and reverts to the book of Enoch:

"...Meanwhile at the table Eve  
Ministered naked, and thir flowing cups  
With pleasant liquors crowned. O innocence  
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,  
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been  
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts  
Love unlibidinous reigned." 2

The sons of God here are obviously the Angels, since Adam is already "enamoured".

In examining the influence of the Christian Era upon Paradise Lost we must consider Paul. Saurat states: "(Milton) uses Paul, as he uses the whole Bible, to prove what he likes, and follows Paul no further than he cares to go". 3

Paul encourages continence for man and the avoidance of fornication:

"The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord.  
Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without his body;  
but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." 4

Milton indulges in personification:

"By thee adultrous lust was driven from men  
Among the bestial herds to range." 5

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- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 617-18
  - 2 Ibid Bk V, ll 443-49
  - 3 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 260
  - 4 I Corinthians 7, (Paul) New Testament.
  - 5 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 753-754

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Paul insists that:... "the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church..." 1

In Paradise Lost this idea becomes:

"He for God only, she for God in him." 2

Another idea of Milton's is sanctioned by Paul.--Adam fell:

"Against his better knowledge, not deceived,  
But fondly overcome by female charm." 3

From the Fathers before the time of Augustine, Milton accepted the idea that the elect (men) were meant to occupy the room left vacant in Heaven by the fallen angels. Milton's God says, speaking of Satan:

"But lest his heart exalt him in the harm  
Already done, to have dispeopled heav'n  
My damage fondly deemed, I can repair  
That detriment, if such it be to lose  
Self-lost, and in a moment will create  
Another world, out of one man a race  
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,  
Not here, till by degrees of merit raised,  
They open themselves at length the way  
Up hither." 4

Another of their concepts was that the Gods of the heathen were none other than the fallen angels. Saurat remarks that Milton used this idea "as a precious instrument, which allows him to pour at will into his epic the whole of Greek mythology." 5

"Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve  
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,  
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,  
By falsities and lies the greatest part  
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake  
God their creator, and the invisible  
Glory of Him that made them to transform

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1 Ephesians 5: 22-23

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, l 299

3 Ibid IX, ll 999-1000

4 Ibid I, ll 150-159

5 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 272





Off to the image of a brute, adorned  
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
 And Devils to adore for Deities:  
 Then were they known to men by various names,  
 And various idols through the heathen world." 1

With Augustine Milton finds a coherent account of the Fall. Augustine sets the fall of the angels at the beginning of creation, before the birth of the world; he finds its motive, pride; he definitely identifies the serpent as Satan; he connects sensuality with Man's fall, and no longer with that of the angels. Except for the last point, Milton has followed Augustine's version almost entirely. In addition to the above points both agreed with Paul that Adam was not deceived by his wife, but he could not resist his love for her.

In other words, man's fall was the triumph of passion over reason and will. God could have prevented the fall of both angels and men, "but he preferred to show what his divine grace was capable of. These considerations comfort Adam in his fall". 2

Milton's central idea in Paradise Lost is that matter has been drawn from God himself and is good and divine; whereas Augustine believed that God created matter out of nothing, and consequently matter tends towards evil, being radically void, and nothing, from its origin. 3

We observe that the different elements of the tale are now evolved; Satan's revolt through ambition; sensuality in the fall of the angels; the temptation of Eve by the Serpent who is Satan; of Adam's through Eve; sensuality in the fall of man.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 364-75

2 Ibid Bk XII, ll 470 ff

3 Saurat, Dennis, Milton: Man & Thinker, p 279





Hebraic and Biblical mythology supplied the foundation upon which Milton set the framework for his great epic poem; astronomy comprised this framework; his desire to write a great work, coupled with the collapse of his religious-political cause supplied the genetic impulse and his poetic genius breathed life into the whole.





## Chapter V

## Sources of Imagery: Astronomical

Benjamin Franklin stated about Astronomy: "The poets, in particular, have been lavish in their praise upon this subject, and are fond of it for one of their boldest images and most sublime descriptions. Virgil, the greatest master of verse after Homer, calls it the sublime of the contemplation of the grand spectacle of the heavens, and ever been considered the noblest privilege of our nature."

## Chapter V

## Sources of Imagery:

## Astronomical

In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the longest for the short time, the imagery and the language are both the most elaborate and the most sublime. In fact, Milton made a thorough study of the astronomy of his time, and he was able to describe the heavens with a precision and a grandeur that no other poet of his age could equal. His knowledge of astronomy was not only accurate but also comprehensive, and he was able to use it to create a sense of the vastness and the mystery of the universe. His imagery is not only beautiful but also powerful, and it is one of the reasons why *Paradise Lost* is still one of the greatest works of English literature.

1. Ben Jonson, *On the Art of Poetry*, in a series of lectures delivered in 1619 at St. Paul's School, London. See *Ben Jonson, The Complete Works*, ed. Charles F. Johnson, 1916, p. 101.

# Chapter V

Sources of Inquiry:

Administrative

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO, ILL.



## Chapter V

### Sources of Imagery: Astronomical

Bonnycastle states about astronomy: "The poets, in particular, have been lavish in their praises upon this subject, and are indebted to it for some of their boldest images and most exalted descriptions. Virgil, the greatest master of verse after Homer speaks of it with enthusiasm...To contemplate the grand spectacle of the heavens, has ever been considered the noblest privilege of our nature."<sup>1</sup>

Milton had an unusual interest in the skies and in heavenly bodies. It is evident from Milton's poetry that the heavenly bodies were a permanent element in the background of his imagination.

In Milton's Paradise Lost the images for the stars have strength and appropriateness. In fact Orchard, who made a thorough study of the astronomy in Paradise Lost, believes that it would be reasonable to imagine that Milton's knowledge of astronomy was comprehensive and accurate,<sup>2</sup> and superior to that possessed by most scientific men of his age. His scholarly attainments, his familiarity with ancient history and philosophy, his profound learning, and the universality of his general knowledge, would lead one to conclude that the science which treats of the mechanism of the heavens, and especially the observation part of it--which at all times has been a source of inspiration to poets of every degree of excellence--was to him a study of absorbing interest, and one calculated to make a deep

1 Bonnycastle, John, An Introduction to Astronomy, In a Series of Lectures from a Preceptor to his Pupil. Fourth Ed. First Discourse.

2 Orchard, Thomas, Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 81

Chapter V

History of the Subject

Benjamin Franklin, in his "Remarks on the State of the Republics," has given us a valuable insight into the mind of the American people. He has shown us that the American people are not content with a mere knowledge of the facts of their history, but that they are also interested in the principles which govern their conduct. This is a noble and exalted position, and it is one which has been maintained by the American people ever since the time of the Revolution. The American people are not content with a mere knowledge of the facts of their history, but they are also interested in the principles which govern their conduct. This is a noble and exalted position, and it is one which has been maintained by the American people ever since the time of the Revolution. The American people are not content with a mere knowledge of the facts of their history, but they are also interested in the principles which govern their conduct. This is a noble and exalted position, and it is one which has been maintained by the American people ever since the time of the Revolution.

1. Benjamin Franklin, "Remarks on the State of the Republics," in *Benjamin Franklin: A Collection of His Writings*, ed. by John G. Barrow (London: 1801), p. 101.



impression upon his devoutly poetical mind. Orchard insists, "No poet, in ancient or modern times, has introduced into his writings with such frequency, or with such pleasing effect, so many passages descriptive of the beauty and grandeur of the heavens. No other poet, by the creative effort of his imagination, has soared to such a height; nor has he ever been excelled in his descriptions of the celestial orbs, and of the beautiful phenomena associated with their different motions."<sup>1</sup>

Newton tells us Milton was keenly interested in astronomy and the mathematics. The selection of astronomy as one of the subjects in which Milton instructed his pupils affords us evidence that he must have devoted considerable time and attention to acquiring a knowledge of the facts and details associated with the study of the science.<sup>2</sup>

In his minor poems, we find enchanting descriptions of celestial objects, and especially of those orbs which, by their brilliancy and luster, have always commanded the admiration of mankind.

For example, in L'Allegro there are the following lines:

"Right against the eastern gate  
Where the great Sun begins his state,  
Robed in flames and amber light,  
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;"<sup>3</sup>

And in Il Penseroso:

"To behold the wandering Moon  
Riding near her highest noon  
Like one that had been led astray  
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,  
And oft as if her head she bowed,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud."<sup>4</sup>

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1 Orchard, Thomas, The Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 81

2 Newton, Thomas, The Life of Milton, p XVIII

3 Milton, John, L'Allegro, ll 59-62

4 Ibid Il Penseroso, ll 67-72





In the happy choice of his theme, and by the comprehensive manner in which he has treated it, Milton has been enabled by his poetic genius to give to the world in his Paradise Lost a poem which, for sublimity of thought, loftiness of imagination, and beauty of expression, is unsurpassed in any language.

After the death of his mother during his stay in Florence (1638), he visited Galileo at Arcetri. There are no details extant concerning this eventful and interesting interview between the aged and blind astronomer, and the young English poet, who afterwards immortalized his name in heroic verse, and who in his declining years suffered from an affliction similar to that which befell Galileo, and to which he alludes so pathetically in the following lines:

"...Thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou  
Revisitest not these eyes, that roll in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veiled..."

1

Orchard suggests that the information communicated by Galileo, or by some of his followers, may have persuaded Milton to entertain a more favorable opinion of the Copernican theory. "There it was," he writes, "I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner of the Inquisition for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Fransiscan and Dominican licensers thought." In years long after, when Milton, himself feeble and blind, sat down to compose his Paradise Lost, the remembrance of the Tuscan artist and his telescope was still fresh in his memory.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 21-26

2 Orchard, Thomas, The Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 83





How much Milton was impressed by the fame of Galileo and his telescope becomes apparent in his references to him in Paradise Lost. In it he alludes to the instrument upon three different occasions: twice when in the hands of Galileo; and the remembrance of Galileo was doubtless in his mind when he mentions the 'glazed optic tube'. The interval that elapsed between the time of Milton's visit to Galileo in 1638, to the publication of Paradise Lost in 1667, included a period of about 30 years, yet this length of time did not erase from Milton's memory his recollection of Galileo and of his pleasant sojourn at Florence.

The first allusion to the Italian astronomer is in the lines in which Milton describes the shield carried by Satan:

"...The broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose orb  
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe..." 1

Galileo is described as having observed the Moon from the heights of Fesole, which formed part of the suburbs of Florence, or from Valdarno, the valley of the Arno, in which the city is situated. The belief that Galileo had discovered continents and seas on the Moon justified Milton in imagining the existence of mountains on the lunar surface. Orchard writes that "Galileo's attention was attracted by the 'freckled aspect' of the Moon-- a visual effect created by the number of extinct volcanoes scattered over the surface of the orb." --hence the expression 'spotty globe'.

In the next allusion to the telescope Milton associates Galileo's

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 286-91

2 Orchard, Thomas, The Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 138





name with the instrument:

"...As when by night the glass  
Of Galileo, less assured, observes  
Imagined lands and regions in the Moon..." 1

In the above lines Milton describes the extent of Galileo's knowledge of our satellite. Orchard informs us that the conclusions which the Italian astronomer arrived at with regard to its inhabitability were not supported by telescopic evidence sufficient enough to justify such a  
2  
belief.

"There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps  
Astronomer in the Sun's lucent orb  
Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw." 3

Milton may have recalled that Galileo was the first astronomer who directed a telescope to the Sun; and that he discovered the dark spots frequently seen on the solar disc.

In his choice of the Ptolemaic cosmology Milton adopted a system with which he had been familiar from his youth--the same which Dante introduced into his poem, The Divine Comedy, and which was well adapted for poetic description. (See page 75 a for diagram) The picturesque conception of the revolving spheres, carrying along with them the orbs assigned to each, which, by their revolution round the steadfast Earth, brought about with unfailing regularity the successive alternation of day and night, and in every twenty-four hours exhibited the 'pleasing vicissitudes of dawn', of sunshine, of twilight, and of darkness, relieved by the 'soft effulgence of the nocturnal sky', afforded Milton a favorable basis upon which to construct a cosmical epic.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk V, ll 261-63

2 Orchard, Thomas, The Life of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 138

3 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 588-90

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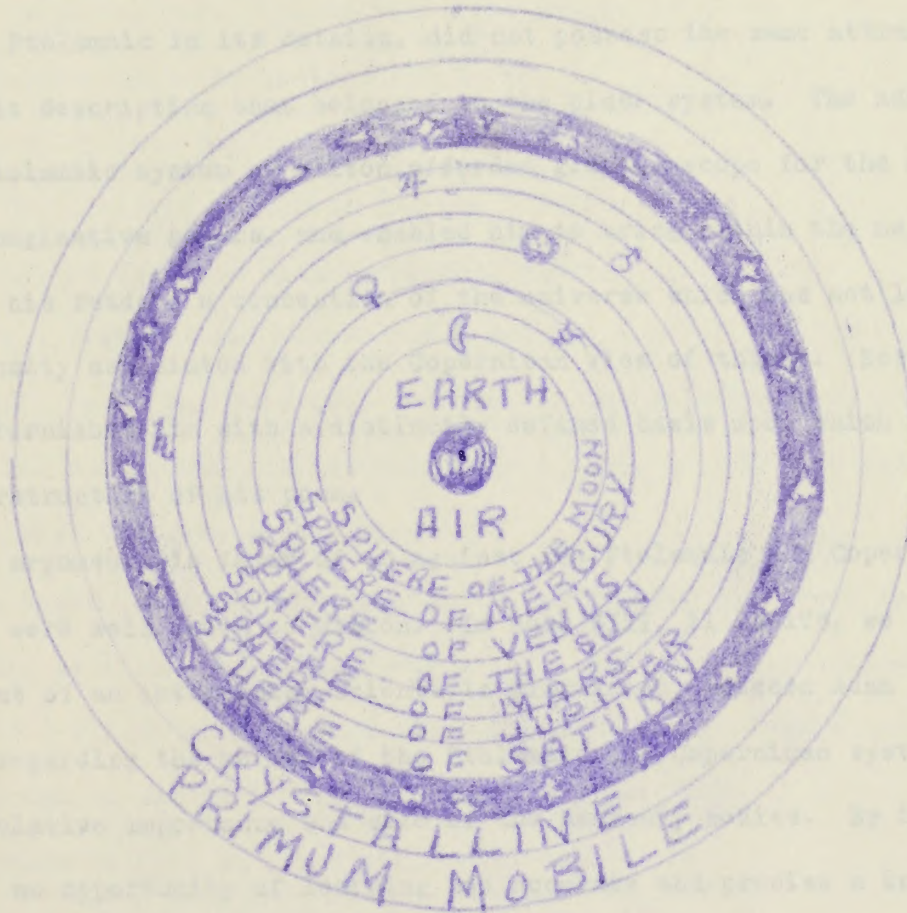
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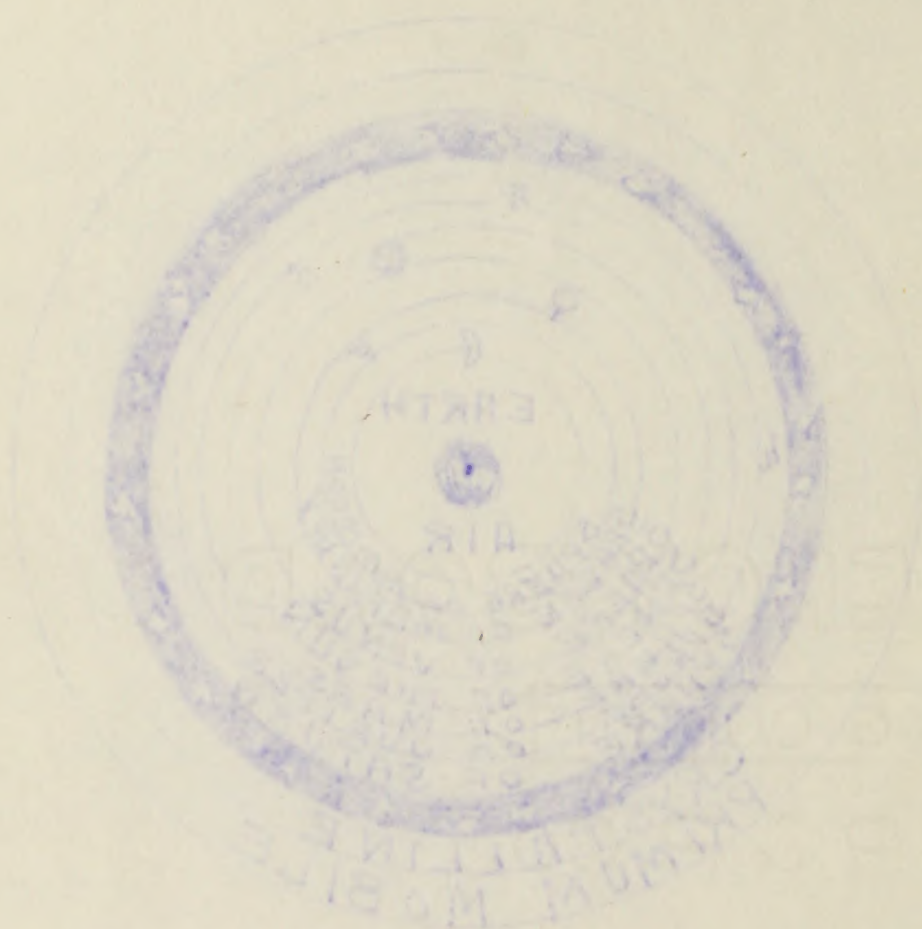
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# The Ptolemaic System



- 1st sphere: that of the Moon.
- 2nd sphere: that of the planet Mercury
- 3rd sphere: that of the planet Venus.
- 4th sphere: that of the Sun; regarded as a planet.
- 5th sphere: that of the planet Mars.
- 6th sphere: that of the planet Jupiter.
- 7th sphere: that of the planet Saturn.
- 8th sphere: that of the fixed stars.
- 9th sphere: Crystalline caused Precession of the Equinoxes.
- 10th sphere: Primum Mobile, or first moved. Caused alternation of day and night by carrying all other spheres round the Earth once in every twenty-four hours.



Let us first of all look at the diagram. The diagram is a circle with several concentric rings. The outermost ring contains the words "PROLOGIC SYSTEM" in a circular arrangement. Inside this, there are several more concentric rings. The central part of the diagram features the word "EARTH" at the top and "AIR" at the bottom, with a small circle in between. The diagram is surrounded by a faint, larger circular border.



The Copernican theory--with which he was equally conversant, and in the accuracy and truthfulness of which he believed--though less complicated than the Ptolemaic in its details, did not possess the same attractiveness for poetic description that belonged to the older system. The adoption of the Ptolemaic system by Milton afforded greater scope for the exercise of his imaginative powers, and enabled him to bring within the mental grasp of his readers a conception of the universe which was not lost in the immensity associated with the Copernican view of things. Besides, it also furnished him with a distinctly defined basis upon which to erect the superstructure of his poem.

The arguments in favor of or against the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories were well known to Milton. In Book VIII, ll 15-175, we find an account of an interesting scientific discussion, between Adam and Raphael regarding the merits of the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems, and of the relative importance and size of the heavenly bodies. By it we are afforded an opportunity of learning how accurate and precise a knowledge Milton possessed of both theories, and in what clear language he expresses his arguments in favor of or against the doctrines associated with each.

In the following lines Adam expresses to his Angel-guest, in forceful and convincing language, his reasons in support of the Copernican theory:

"When I behold this goodly Frame, this World  
Of Heav'n and Earth consisting, and compute,  
Thir magnitudes, this Earth a spot, a graine,  
An Atom, with the Firmament compar'd  
And all her numbered Starrs, that seem to rowle  
Spaces incomprehensible (for such  
Thir distance argues and thir swift return  
Diurnal) meerly to officiate light  
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,  
One day and night; in all thir vast survey

The Copernican theory--with which he was highly conversant, and in the accuracy and truthfulness of which he believed--though long and laborious, and in its details, his not possess the same attainments for poetic description that belonged to the older system. The notion of the Ptolemaic system of Milton attracted another look for the exercise of his imaginative powers, and enabled him to bring within the mental grasp of his readers a conception of the universe which was not lost in the language associated with the Copernican view of things. Besides, it also furnished him with a richly defined basis upon which to erect the superstructure of his poem.

The arguments in favor of or against the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories were well known to Milton. In Book VIII. ll. 15-17, we find an account of an interesting scientific discussion, between Adam and Raphael regarding the merits of the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems, and of the relative importance and effect of the heavenly bodies. By it we are afforded an opportunity of learning how accurate and precise a knowledge Milton possessed of both theories, and in what degree language he expressive his arguments in favor of or against the theories associated with each. In the following lines Adam expresses to his wife Eve, in so terse and convincing language, his reasons in support of the Ptolemaic theory:

"When I could this globe's frame, this world  
Of heav'n and earth construct, and compute,  
This magnitude, this earth's extent, the line  
An Atom, with the firmament compare;  
And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll  
Against inconceivable far  
This distance, and this vast extent  
Of heav'n, to this small point of light  
Would this compass point, this punctual spot,  
One day and night, in all this vast survey



Useless besides, reasoning I oft admire,  
 How Nature wise and frugal could commit  
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand  
 So many nobler Bodies to create,  
 Greater so manifold to this one use,  
 For aught appeers, and on thir Orbs impose  
 Such restless revolution day by day  
 Repeated, while the sedentarie Earth,  
 That better might with farr less compass move,  
 Serv'd by more noble than her self, attaines  
 Her end without least motion, and receaves,  
 As Tribute such a sumless journey brought  
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;  
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness Number failes." 1

We may observe that Milton had a correct conception of the magnitude and proportion of the universe, and also of the relative size and importance of the Earth, which he describes as a spot, a grain, an atom, when compared with the surrounding heavens.

The Angel, after listening to Adam's argument, expresses approval of his desire to obtain knowledge, but answers him dubiously, and at the same time criticizes in a severe and adverse manner the Ptolemaic theory.

"To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n  
 Is as the Book of God before thee set,  
 Wherein to read his wondrous Works, and learne  
 His Seasons, Hours, or Days, or Months, or Yeares;  
 This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,  
 Imports not, if thou reck'n right, the rest  
 From Man or Angel the great Architect  
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge  
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought  
 Rather admire; or if they list to try  
 Conjecture, he his Fabric of the Heav'ns  
 Hath left to thir disputes, perhaps to move  
 His laughter at thir quaint Opinions wide  
 Hereafter, when they come to model Heav'n  
 And calculate the Starrs, how they will weild  
 The mightie frame, how build, unbuild, contrive  
 To save appeerances, how gird the Sphear  
 With Centric and Eccentric scribl'd o're,  
 Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb:" 2

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk VIII, ll 15-38

2 Ibid ll 66-84





The Copernican theory is lucidly described by the Angel in the following lines:

".....What if the Sun  
Be Center to the World, and other Starrs  
By his attractive vertue and thir own  
Incited, dance about him various rounds?  
Thir wandring course now high, now low, then hid,  
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,  
In six thou seest, and what if sev'nth to these  
The planet Earth, so stedfast though she seem,  
Insensibly three different Motions move?  
Which else to several Sphears thou must ascribe,  
Mov'd contrarie with thwart obliquities,  
Or save the Sun his labour, and that swift  
Nocturnal and Diurnal rhomb suppos'd,  
Invisible else above all Starrs, the Wheele  
Of Day and Night; which needs not thy beleefe,  
If Earth industrious of her self fetch Day  
Traveling East, and with her part averse  
From the Suns beam meet Night, her other part  
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light  
Sent from her through the wide transpicious aire,  
To the terrestrial Moon, be as a Starr  
Enlightning her by Day, as she by Night  
This Earth? reciprocal, if Land be there,  
Fields and Inhabitants: Her spots thou seest  
As Clouds, and Clouds may rain, and Rain produce  
Fruits in her soft'nd Soile, for some to eate  
Allotted there; and other Suns perhaps  
With thir attendant Moons thou wilt describe  
Communicating Male and Female Light,  
Which two great Sexes animate the World,  
Stor'd in each Orb perhaps with some that live.  
For such vast room in Nature unpossess'd  
By living Soules, desert and desolate,  
Onely to shine, yet scarce to contribute  
Each Orb a glimpse of Light, conveyed so farr  
Down to this habitable, which returnes  
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute." 1

The Sun having been assigned to the central position under the Copernican system--the planets circling in orbits around it--Milton reveals his precise knowledge of this theory through a description of the





magnetic fibres which keep the planets in their proper spheres, the Law of Gravitation being unknown then:

"..They, as they move  
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute  
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp  
 Turn swift their magnetic motions, or are turned  
 By his magnetic beam."

1

In bringing his conversation with Adam to a conclusion the Angel deems it advisable to vouchsafe him a decisive reply to his inquiry regarding the motions of celestial bodies, and in the following lines gives a beautifully poetical summary of this elevated and philosophic discussion:

"But whether thus these things, or whether not,  
 Whether the Sun predominant in Heav'n  
 Rise on the Earth, or Earth rise on the Sun,  
 He from the East his flaming rode begin,  
 Or Shee from West her silent course advance  
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps  
 On her soft Axle, while she paces Ev'n,  
 And bears thee soft with the smooth Air along,  
 Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid..."

2

In this scientific discourse between Adam and Raphael, in which they discuss the structural arrangement of the heavens and the motions of the celestial bodies, we are afforded an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the exact and comprehensive knowledge Milton possessed of both the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories.

The Creation, which comes shortly after the Fall of Lucifer and his cohorts, and is performed in seven days, is full of vivid description. Milton describes the 'dark abyss of Chaos'--a tempest-tossed sea of warring elements upturned in wild confusion; the formless mass of matter

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, 579, 583

2 Ibid VIII, 159-167





assuming the figure of a sphere; the earth poised on its axis; the appearance of light; the creation of the firmament; the creation of land--the gathering of waters off the face of the globe into the seas, and employs personification when he 'clothes the earth with vegetation'. All this he does with strong masterful strokes, every element of the picture in its place, without a trace of a smear.

In his sublime description of the Creation Milton adheres with marked fidelity to the Mosaic version, as narrated in the first two chapters of Genesis, when God, by specific acts in certain stated periods of time, created the visible universe and all it contains.

The successive acts of creation are described in words almost identical with those of the Scripture, embellished and adorned with all the wealth of expression which our language is capable of affording. The whole creation rang with jubilant delight, and the bright throng of seraphs and cherubs which witnessed the wonders of His might followed Him with acclamation, up through the Milky Way, to the 'Heaven of Heavens'.

"Up He rode..."

and Milton introduces the:

"...Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned  
 Angelic harmonies; The Earth, the air  
 Resounded (those remember'st, for thou heard'st)  
 The Heavens and all the constellations rung,  
 The planets in their stations listing stood,  
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
 'Open ye Heavens! your living doors; let in  
 The great Creator, from his work returned  
 Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;"      1





The magnificent music in the lines above speaks for itself.

After reading through the creation, it would be impossible not to feel impressed by the accuracy and comprehensiveness of Milton's celestial knowledge; and how he managed to combine in charming poetic expression the dry details of science with the divine inspiration of the heavenly muse.

Orchard says: "The distinctive appearances of the Sun, Moon, planets, and stars; their functional importance as regards this terrestrial sphere; the splendour and lustre peculiar to each; and the glory displayed in the entire created heavens, are portrayed with a skill indicative of a masterly knowledge of the science of astronomy."<sup>1</sup>

"Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name  
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine  
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,  
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!  
The meaning, not the name, I call; for thou  
Nor of the Muses mine, nor on the top  
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but heavenly-born,  
Before the hills appeared or the fountain flowed,  
Thou with Eternal Wisdom did converse,  
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased  
With thy celestial song."<sup>2</sup>

The Muses were Greek Mythological divinities who possessed the power of inspiring song, and were the patrons of poets and musicians. There were nine of them and they presided over the arts. Urania was the Goddess of Astronomy, and Calliope the Goddess of Epic Poetry. Homer alludes to them as goddesses of song who dwelt on the summit of Mount Olympus. Milton does not invoke the mythological goddess, but Urania, the Heavenly Muse, whose aid he implores.

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1 Orchard, Thomas, The Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 326

2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk VII, ll 1-12





The natural phenomena which occur with each rotation of the Earth are 'agreeable alternations in the aspect of nature' with which everyone is familiar. The 'rosy footsteps of Morn', the 'solar splendor of noon-day'; the 'fading hues of even'; and 'night with her jewelled carots and streams of molten stars' have been sung with admiration by poets of every nation and every age.

In this respect Milton is unsurpassed by any poet in ancient or modern times. The occasions upon which he alludes to the heavenly bodies in imagery, testify to the felicity of his thoughts and to the greatness of his poetic genius. I am sure no poet has ever given us a lovelier description of evening, or has added more to its exquisite beauty by his allusion to the celestial orbs, than Milton when he describes the first evening in Paradise:

"Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale.  
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;  
 Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament  
 With living sapphires: Hesperus that led  
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the Morn,  
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
 Apparent Queen, unveiled her peerless light  
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw." 1

In the avowal of her conjugal love, Eve, with charming imagery, associates the orbs of the firmament with the delightful appearances of nature which presented themselves to her observation after she awoke to the consciousness of intelligent existence:

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 598-609





"Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,  
 With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the Sun,  
 When first on his delightful land he spreads  
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,  
 Glistening the dew; fragrant the fertile Earth  
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
 Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,  
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair Moon,  
 And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:  
 But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends  
 With charm of earliest birds, nor rising Sun  
 Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
 Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
 With this her solemn bird; nor walk by Moon,  
 Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.  
 But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom  
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?" 1

The Morning Hymn of Praise which Adam and Eve offer up in concert to their Maker contains their loftiest thoughts and most reverent sentiments, expressed in melodiously flowing verse. They call upon the orbs of the firmament to join in praising and extolling the Creator, and address by name those that are most conspicuous. Hesperus, 'fairest of stars', is asked to praise Him in her sphere. The Sun, great image of his Maker, is told to acknowledge Him as greater, and to sound His praise in his eternal course. The Moon, the fixed stars, and the planets are all called upon to 'resound His praise';

"Fairest of Starrs, last in the train of Night,  
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crownst the smiling Morn  
 With thy bright Circlet, praise him in thy Spheare  
 While day arises, that sweet hour of Prime.  
 Thou Sun, of this great World both Eye and Soule,  
 Acknowledge him thy Greater, sound his praise  
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,  
 And when high Noon hast gain'd, and when thou fallst.  
 Moon, that now meetst the orient Sun, now fli'st

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 641-658





With the fixt Starrs, fixt in thir Orb that flies,  
 And yee five other wandring Fires that move  
 In mystic Dance not without Song, resound  
 His praise, who out of Darkness call'd up Light." 1

Orchard states, "One of the distinguishing features of Milton's mind was his wonderful imagination, and in its exercise he beheld those celestial and terrestrial visions on which he reared fabrics of splendour and beauty, described in harmonious numbers with the fervid eloquence and charm of a true poet."<sup>2</sup>

That the observation of the celestial orbs, their phases, and the varied phenomena which occur as a consequence of their motions, were to Milton an unfailing source of enjoyment and of meditative delight, is evident from the frequency with which he alludes to them. In closing, I draw upon the following lines to testify to this:

"For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance always with delight!  
 But what created mind can comprehend  
 Their numbers, or the wisdom infinite  
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?" 3

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk V, ll 166-179

2 Orchard, Thomas, The Astronomy of Milton in Paradise Lost, p 335

3 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk III, ll 703-708





## Chapter VI

### Sources of Imagery: Classical Mythology

We have traced the five basic elements (the elements)—the five elements abstracted from Hebrew and Christian religious sources; we have united the tapestry of mythology (the framework) to this great epic, and let us turn to Milton's imagery and determine the role it plays in Paradise Lost.

### Chapter VI

#### Sources of Imagery:

In Chapter I, Classical Mythology we define an image as a description or an idea, which by comparison or analogy, is used to understand, with something else, something to us through the senses, and associations it arouses, something of the experience, the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceived or has felt what it is telling us. Milton's method of introducing such allusions are principally three. First, imagery is introduced in simile or comparison. Thus in Book II he describes the turmoil of his winds with:

"Lead up your rocks and hills, and rise the air  
To whirlwind; Whirlwind! Whirlwind! Whirlwind!  
As when Atlantic Ocean's waves  
With conquest, felt th' ocean's roar, and tore  
Through pale by the roots Thetys' Pines,  
And lashed from the top of Ossa waves  
Into th' Aegean Sea."

At times the comparison may be very brief, as when the winds are represented more succinctly to the call of Eve:

"Then at Circum call the hard disguised."

## Chapter VI

Sources of Income

General Principles

PROPERTY TAX

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

PROPERTY TAX



## Chapter VI

## Sources of Imagery:

## Classical Mythology

We have traced the five basic elements (the foundation)--which Milton abstracted from Hebraic and Christian religious sources; we have defined the importance of astronomy (the framework) to this grand epic, now, let us turn to Milton's background of classical lore and determine the role it plays in Paradise Lost.

In Chapter I, (Definition of an Image), we define an image as 'a description of an idea, which by comparison or analogy, stated or understood, with something else, transmits to us through the emotions and associations it arouses, something of the wholeness, the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceives or has felt what he is telling us.' Milton's methods of introducing such allusion are principally three. First, they may be introduced in simile or comparison. Thus in Bk II he describes the turmoil of the fiends who:

"Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air  
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar.  
As when Alcides from Oealia Crown'd  
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore  
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian Pines,  
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw  
Into th' Euboic Sea." 1

At times the comparison may be very brief, as when the beasts are represented more obedient to the call of Eve:

"Then at Circean call the herd disguised." 2

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk II, ll 540-546

2 Ibid 522





1

Or it may even not exceed the mere mention of 'Typhoean rage' or  
 2  
 'Atlantean shoulders'.

Milton often masses classical allusions of this kind, piling them sometimes four or five deep, and obtaining by means of this accumulation an effect of great richness--thus of the tempter disguised as a serpent he says:

"Pleasing was his shape  
 And lovely, never since of serpent kind  
 Lovelier--not those that in Illyria changed  
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god  
 In Epidaurus; not to which transformed  
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen.  
 He with Olympia, this with her who bore  
 Scipio the highth of Rome."

3

Supposing that the reader is not familiar with all the allusions of this passage, the very succession of sonorous 'vowels and liquids', which Milton so often effected by his choice and arrangement of proper names, enhances the splendor of this massed comparison. In some cases such comparisons are reinforced or extended by allusions which are not mythological or even classical, or mythological allusions introduced for another purpose than comparison may occur in close connection with these passages. It is by such treatment that the description of Eden, in the Fourth Book, expresses through its own rich luxuriance the luxuriance of the Garden. We hear first the sound of clear water running over beds of pearl and gold, now sparkling in the sun, now lost in the green twilight of deep woods. Against the dark foliage is the gleam of fruits with golden rind, 'Hesperian fables true'. The air is filled with the fragrance of gorgeous

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk II, ll 539

2 Ibid 306

3 Ibid Bk IX, ll 503-510





flowers, and with the soft call of unseen birds. Where the leafy branches part little vistas invite exploration.

"...Aires, vernal aires,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan  
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance  
Led on th' Eternal Spring. Not that faire field  
Of Enna, where Proserpin gathring flours  
Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis  
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain  
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove  
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd  
Castalian Spring might with this Paradise  
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian Ile  
Girt with the River Triton, where old Cham,  
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,  
Hid Amalthea and her Florid Son  
Young Bacchus from his stepdame Rhea's eye;  
Nor where Abassin Kings thir issue Guard,  
Mount Amara, though this by som suppos'd  
True Paradise under the Ethiop Line  
By Nilus head, enclos'd with shining Rock,  
A whole days journey high, but wide remote  
From this Assyrian Garden where the Fiend  
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind  
Of living Creatures new to sight and strange:" 1

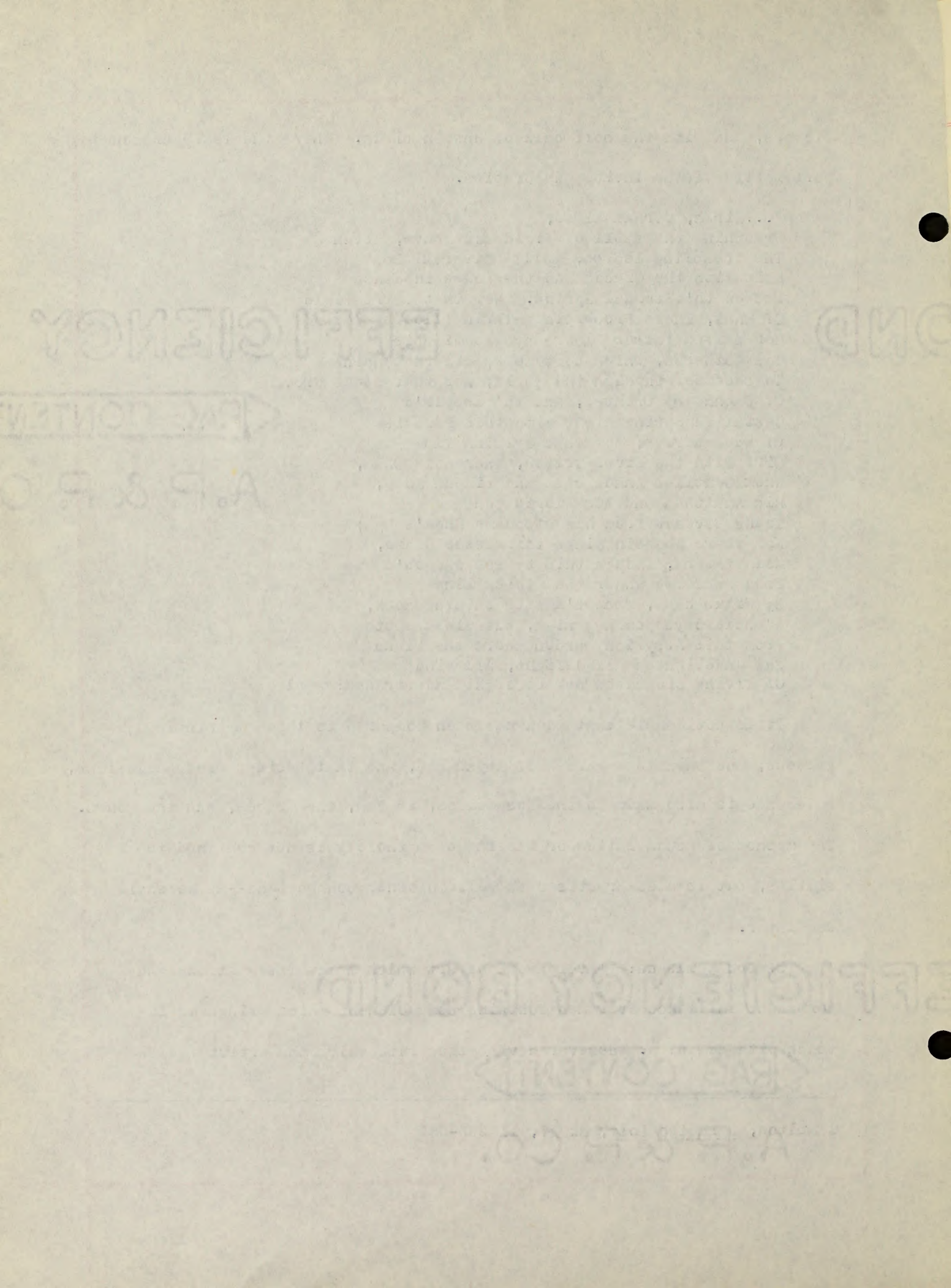
It is noticeable that Eden has been compared to three mythical gardens, and then to a garden of Abyssinia, and that besides these allusions, reference is also made to the Hesperides, to Pan, the Graces, and the Hours. The method of accumulation or massing of mythology is not confined to similes, but is also practised as well in other connections--as we shall see later.

Osgood tells us: "Every work of art which maintains a strong and permanent influence over men contains some element which brings us in touch with humanity. However divine the truth which the artist feels,

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 265-287







however radiant the beauty of nature is to him, his art is incomplete if his thoughts of these things are not brought home to men in terms of human life. It is for this reason that a printing or a description of a landscape which reproduces simply the landscape itself is imperfect. The best art therefore personifies the forces of nature, or perhaps is content with suggesting types or phases of human life which seem to correspond in spirit to the particular type or phase of nature." In Milton's description of Eden the same principle applies to the mention of Pan and the Hours. Furthermore, in the comparison occurring here Milton has not stopped with mere allusion to myths, as in his description of the 'serpent-fiend', but has outlined in his concise and significant way the stories of Proserpina and Amalthea, and has suggested the voice heard in the Castalian spring sacred to the Apollo and Daphne of the Orient, thus furnishing appropriate personal types to reflect the natural beauty previously described.

The following are further examples of accumulated mythology in simile or comparison found in Paradise Lost:

The description of Satan floating 'many a rood',

"...in bulk as huge  
As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,  
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,  
Briarios or Typhon, whom the Den  
By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast  
Leviathon, which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:  
Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam  
The Pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,  
Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,  
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind.." 2

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1 Osgood, Chas. G., *The Classical Mythology of Milton's Eng. Poems*, Introd.  
2 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 196-208 / p 16





Milton describes the size of Satan's army:

"..though all the Giant brood  
Of Phlegra with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd  
That gought at Theb's and Ilium, on each side  
Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds  
In fable or Romance of Uthers Son  
Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;  
And all who since, Baptiz'd or Infidel  
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,  
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,  
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore  
When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell  
By Fontarabbia.." 1

Description of Adam and Eve's 'blissful bower':

"..In shadier Bower  
More sacred and sequesterd, though but feignd,  
Pan or Silvanus never slept, nor Nymph,  
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess  
With Flowers, Garlands, and sweet-smelling Herbs  
Espoused Eve deckt first her Nuptial Bed,  
And heav'nly Quires the Hymenaeal sung,  
What day the genial Angel to our Sire  
Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd  
More lovely then Pandora, whom the Gods  
Endowd with all thir gifts, and O too like  
In sad event, when to the unwiser Son  
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd  
Mankind with her faire looks, to be aveng'd  
On him who had stole Joves authentic fire." 2

Milton describes Eve's beauty:

"...So to the Silvan Lodge  
They came, that like Pomona's Arbour smil'd  
With flourets deck't and fragrant smells; but Eve  
Undeck't, save with her self more lovely fair  
Than Wood-nymph, or the fairest Goodess feign'd  
Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove..." 3

Milton describes his 'Sad task':

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- 1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 575-587  
2 Ibid Bk IV, ll 705-719  
3 Ibid Bk V, ll 377-382





"...Sad task, yet argument  
 Not less but more Heroic than the wrauth  
 Of stern Achilles on his Foe pursu'd  
 Thrice Fugitive about Troy Wall; or rage  
 Of Turnus for Laviaia disespous'd,  
 Or Neptun's ire or Juno's, that so long  
 Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's Son;.." 1

Thus we see that the simile and comparison enabled Milton to incorporate classical mythology within the story and by employing pagan lore greatly enriching it.

A second method of introducing allusion to classical mythology is illustrated in the incorporation of a myth or the ancient conception of a divinity into a poetical setting of Milton's own creation.

This Milton accomplished in two distinct ways. First the myth or conception, of which the several details may come from several different sources, may be removed, (for example) from the specific setting of Homer, Appollonius, and Ovid and placed in the different setting of the first or second books of Paradise Lost.<sup>2</sup> Osgood suggests that the indefinite and shadowy classical idea of Chaos, as either a place or a divinity, or merely an unadorned condition of things, has been elaborated under Milton's treatment, and separated into two distinct meanings in the cosmography of Paradise Lost. On the one hand, the word is applied to the deep and confused region between heaven and hell. On the other, it names the divinity who rules this region. (Principal source of the latter conception is in Hesiod). In Paradise Lost the consort of Chaos, and his co-ruler, is Night. The Miltonic conception of Night is based upon that of the

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IX, ll 13-19

2 Osgood, Chas. G., The Classical Mythology of Milton's English Poems,  
 p XVIII





'Orphic Cosmogony', which makes her eldest and first of all things. Thus the two Greek cosmogonies are combined, and introduced into the Second Book of the great epic. By the same method, Satan and Jove and other Greek gods are made to appear among the devils, the most conspicuous of them all being Hephaestus, or Mulciber, the skillful craftsman and architect of Pandemonium:

"...his hand was known  
In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,  
Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence,  
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in his Herarchie, the Orders bright,  
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd  
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
Men called him Mulciber; and now he fell  
From Heav'n they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements; from Morn  
To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,  
A Summers day; and with the setting Sun  
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,  
On Lemnos th' Aegaeon Ile: thus they relate,  
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell long before; nor aught avail' him now  
To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he scape  
By all his Engins, but was headlong sent  
With his industrious crew to build in hell." 1

The second way in which Milton incorporates or 'inweaves' mythology with his story is by adopting certain mythological events or features by removing from them the persons and localities with which they are connected in his sources, and substituting his own persons and localities. An example is Eve's story of discovering her own beauty:

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll 742-751





"Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread  
 Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd  
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went  
 With unexperient thought, and laid me downe  
 On the green bank, to look into the cleer  
 Smooth Lake, that to me seemed another Skie.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite,  
 A shape within the watry gleam appeerd  
 Bending to look on me, I started back,  
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,  
 Pleas'd it returned as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathie and love, there I had fixt  
 Mine eyes till now, and pin' with vain desire  
 Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,  
 What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,  
 With thee it came and goes;..." 1

It is Ovid's story of Narcissus and his love for the face that he saw reflected in the water of a spring, except Eve is substituted for Narcissus. Milton, as usual, follows many of the details of his original, but by a process of selection and exclusion renders them more delicately.

In speaking of Eve Milton says:

"With goddess-like demeanor forth she went,  
 Not unattended; for on her as Queen  
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,..." 2

He is thinking of a conception of Venus, or Aphrodite, which is very common in the classics.

We may now consider the third method by which Milton introduces allusions to classical mythology. His descriptions of nature are generally either mythological or touched with mythology. Especially is this true in descriptions of the dawn, of night, and of the progress of the sun and moon.

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 453-469

2 Ibid Bk VIII, ll 59-61





Milton can enlighten and illuminate descriptions of natural beauty by throwing into them a touch of human life which reflects the spirit of that which he is describing. This is what Shakespeare does in peopling the forest of Arden with blithe spirits who make us forget that trees are not always green, and brooks merry; and in Milton, the same result is produced by reflecting the spirit of nature from the personalities of the old gods, often slightly modified by the poet's art. It is thus that he tells of the beginning of another day:

"Now morn her rosie steps in th' Eastern Clime  
Advancing, sow'd the Earth with Orient Pearle.." 1

And again he speaks of the Sun:

"...who scarce up risen  
With wheels yet hov'ring o're the Ocean brim,  
Shot paralel to the earth his dewie ray,  
Discovering in wide Lantskip all the East." 2

While it is true that Milton humanizes nature by means of mythology, we may go further, or perhaps reverse the statement, and say that in general, whatever the occasion of introducing the myth, if its persons or incidents connote even in the slightest degree the beauty or the power of nature, Milton makes us feel it. The luxuriance of spring is felt in a reference to the love of Zeus and Hera:

"...As Jupiter  
On Juno smiles when he impregns the clouds  
That shed May flowers." 4

Or in describing the luxuriance of the sweet-smelling flowers in his

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk. V, ll 1-2

2 Ibid ll 139-142

3 Classical myth-(not the Fall).

4 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 459-501





description of 'thir blissful Bower':

"...it was a place  
 Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd  
 All things to mans delightful use; the rooffe  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and Mirtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub  
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,  
 Iris all hues, Roses, and Gessamin  
 Rear'd high thir flourisht heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaic; underfoot the Violet,  
 Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay  
 Broiderd the ground, more colour'd then with stone  
 Of costliest Emblem:"

1

This consideration of the mythology in Milton's descriptions of nature is important since it opens the way to more thorough appreciation of his independence and originality, and of the true nature of his classicism and his artistic temperament.

In the Fifth Book, the Morning Star is addressed as:

"Fairest of Stars, last in the train of Night,  
 If better thou belong not to the Dawn,  
 Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn  
 With thy bright circlet."

2

Of this passage the words 'last in the train of Night' are all that suggest the classical idea that the stars are attendant upon Night.

More pronounced is the mythological character of the following lines:

"First in his east the glorious Lamp was seen  
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
 His longitude through heaven's high road; the gray  
 Dawn and the Pleiades before him danced  
 Shedding sweet influence."

3

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1 Milton, Paradise Lost, Bk IV, ll 690-702

2 Ibid Bk V, ll 166-169

3 Ibid Bk VII, ll 370-375





Though this passage is founded principally upon the Bible, yet Milton, in combining the different parts, has given it a decided classical coloring, slightly modified by characterizing the Dawn as 'gray'; and so nicely are the parts fitted together that a seam is imperceptible, nor is it easy to tell where classical mythology ends and any other element begins.

At least two Biblical passages are represented by these lines.

The most important one is Psalm 19, 4-6

'Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the son, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof!.

The second passage is Job 38-31, where is mentioned 'the sweet influence of the Pleiades'.

The majority of natural descriptions in Milton contain a more or less prominent suggestion of the mythical conception, together with a large element of Milton's elaboration. We may now consider what is more rare, mainly, a description composed almost entirely of mythology. It occurs at the opening of the Sixth Book of Paradise Lost:

"All night the dreadless Angel unpursu'd  
Through Heav'n's wide Champain held his way till Morn,  
Wak't by the circling Hours, with rosie hand  
Unbarr'd the gates of Light. There is a Cave  
Within the Mount of God, fast by his Throne,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heav'n  
Grateful vicissitude, like Day and Night;





Light issues forth, and at the other dore  
 Obsequious darkness enters, till her houre  
 To veile the Heav'n, though darkness there might well  
 Seem twilight here; and now went forth the Morn  
 Such as in highest Heav'n, arrayd in Gold  
 Empyrean, from before her vanisht Night,  
 Shot through with orient Beams:"

1

In this passage there is an almost literal adaptation of at least four classical poets or poetic conceptions. The general idea of Dawn's opening the gates is from Ovid; the action of the Hours is from Homer; the cave of Light and Darkness is Hesiod's house of Day and Night; the final rout of Night before the beams of sun is a common conception of Greek poetry, though perhaps in this case referable to Dante.

We may notice that in this passage Milton intends to describe not the earthly dawn, but the grateful vicissitude of light and darkness in heaven. There is, however, in his description a beautiful reflection of the spring-day as it has appeared to many men, and this reveals to us a most important quality in Milton's treatment of mythology and nature. He appreciates the values of two things, nature and the myth, but to him the value of nature outweighs that of the myth. This accounts for the vividness and reality and enthusiasm, which, if the proportion of values were reversed, would tend to become pedantry and dry conventionality. With a view to this statement, let us take the first lines of the preceding passage:

"...Morn,  
 Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
 Unbarred the gates of Light."

2

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1 Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Ch. VI, ll 1-15

2 Ibid 2-4





Let us analyze this passage. Milton is speaking of dawn in heaven, and the thought of gates naturally leads him to think of the Hours who are the warders of heavens gates. Osgood suggests that they are "adapted from Homer with the addition of a beautiful epithet, 'circling', from the common tradition of Greek poetry."<sup>1</sup> But the mere juxtaposition of these things is not enough.

Milton loves the morning for its freshness, its action, its grace, dignity, its progress toward a glorious climax, and all these things are present in his description. There is action in the words 'wait' and 'circling' and 'unbarred', and in the intervening or accompanying movement which they suggest. There is freshness and grace in the swift Hours, and in the modest but effective touch of color. There is dignity, because the movement, though rapid, is not hurried, and stays slightly at the words 'with rosy hand'. There is progress towards a climax. Morn is waked by the Hours; She rises, throws back the bolt; the gates swing open without effort, and light leaps forth and overspreads the sky. This action is suggested, if not expressed.

It would be a mistake to assume that Milton deliberately and consciously went about arranging his descriptions in this way. He rather felt deeply and keenly the glories of a new day, so deeply and keenly that his poetic sense rushed in and 'instructed' his description, with results as we see above.

Osgood suggests that the myth does not remain or become in his hands

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<sup>1</sup> Osgood, Chas. G., Classical Mythology in Milton, p 28





a lifeless convention; nor is it a sort of mythological veil, through which we faintly see the loveliness of nature. Rather, on the one hand he understands the spirit of nature, and is in harmony with it; on the other, he has sympathized with the Greek imagination until he imagines in part as a Greek. When, therefore, he hears the Greek lyre, though echoed never so faintly, a note first stirred by the great harp of nature, he recognizes it, and sounds it again loud and clear, inseparably mingling<sup>1</sup> the qualities of the few instruments in one tone.

A study of Milton's mythology, being limited to a particular kind of subject-matter, cannot furnish complete evidence, but only an indication, of his attainments and his preferences in reading. Yet with but this partial knowledge, we may wonder at the greatness of these attainments.

<sup>2</sup>  
Osgood tells us that there are four poets from whom he certainly derived more help than from any others. These are Homer, Hesiod, Virgil, and Ovid. Hesiod, in proportion to the body of his poetry, probably furnished Milton with the greatest amount of material. Of the Iliad we find most frequent allusions to the first book, to the second, fifth and eighteenth books. Of the Odyssey the eighth, tenth, and eleventh books are the favorites. The first and sixth books of the Aeneid are apparently much preferred to any others, and though not infrequent use is made of the third, fourth, and fifth. Of Ovid's metamorphoses the first book is most often used. Next in importance to these four sources are Euripides, Pindar, Theocritus, and the

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1 Osgood, Chas. G., Classical Mythology in Milton, p 29

2 Ibid 42

a listless contemplation; nor is it a sort of systematic veil, through  
 which we faintly see the landscape of nature. Rather, on the one hand  
 we understand the spirit of nature, and we are inwardly with it; on the  
 other, we are acquainted with the Greek imagination as with its language.  
 In fact, as a Greek. When, therefore, he hears the Greek hymn, though  
 he cannot hear as a Greek, a note which is not in the Greek hymn of nature,  
 he recognizes it, and knows it as his own, and thus, inwardly with it,  
 the qualities of the hymn are his own. Thus,  
 a study of Wilson's mythology, being limited to a particular kind of  
 subject-matter, cannot furnish complete evidence, but only an indication  
 of his acquaintance and his command in the field. The study of this  
 partial knowledge, which would be the evidence of these statements.  
 Wilson tells us that there are four books in the series: *Mythology*, *Religion*, *Philosophy*, and *Art*.  
 more being than from any other. These are *Mythology*, *Religion*, *Philosophy*, and *Art*.  
 He is, in addition to the body of his work, especially familiar with  
 with the various aspects of mythology. Of the list of his work I repeat  
 attention to the first book, in the second, third and fourth books. Of  
 the *Mythology* and *Religion*, *Philosophy*, and *Art* books are the *Mythology*. The  
 first and second books of the series are especially much regarded as the  
 others, and which now I repeat as it is of the first, second, and  
 third. Of Wilson's mythology and the first book is most often used. Next in  
 importance to these four books are *Mythology*, *Religion*, *Philosophy*, and the



Homeric hymns. Milton has also drawn some of his mythology from Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plato, the Orphic hymns and Appolonius of Rhodes; from Herodotus, Plutarch, Pliny, Diodorus, and Strabo; from Horace, Statius, Claudian, and the tragedies of Seneca. To these we may add, though the list will be by no means exhaustive, Cicero, Athenaeus, Hyginus, Aratus, Macrobius, Lucretius, and most of the minor poets of the empire.

Having thus considered the extent of Milton's reading, we may see how it becomes a condition of the two qualities of range and synthesis. These qualities are simply the reflex of corresponding ones in the poet himself. To Milton an extension of his reading was an extension of life with all its experience, sympathies, and understanding, into the life and times of which he read. It is known that travel enlarges a man's nature. For the sensitive mind books do the same, and in the case of Milton the quality of wide range in his poetic utterance was a direct consequence of the range of his own mind, which his reading had done much to extend.

Milton was not in the narrower sense either classicist or romanticist. He was not exclusively Platonic, Hellenic, Hebraic, Medieval, or Modern. He rather includes in the compass of his great nature the best of each manner or culture, and, by using them all, in the expression of his personality shows their common truth and vitality as related to the highest conduct of life. His clear, high vision did not belittle the value of even an obscure, quaint myth but exalted it above the height of its own intrinsic worth.

In studying the sources of imagery in Paradise Lost we determined that Hebraic and Biblical mythology provided the foundation; astronomy





comprised the framework, and Milton's acceptance of the concept of heathen Gods being none other than fallen angels, supplied the *deus ex machina* by which classical mythology was enabled to add the bricks, mortar, casements and decorations to the structure.

Through this treatment of the sources of Paradise Lost I have endeavored to show the intimate relationship between these sources and Milton's imagery.

Conclusion

complicated the literature, and Milton's acceptance of the concept of heaven  
 God being none other than "aether" which supplied the heat in nature  
 by which classical mythology was enabled to add the birds, water,  
 elements and decorations to the structure.

Through this treatment of the sources of Milton's Paradise Lost I have  
 endeavored to show the intimate relationship between these sources and  
 Milton's imagery.



## Chapter VII

## Conclusion

By viewing John Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*, in the light of his imagery, I have attempted to show the direct relationship between this imagery and his background, and how this imagery reveals certain information about his personality.

## Chapter VII

## Conclusion

His long and arduous preparation for the task of composing his great epic, his long imprisonment, the literature he studied, his love for nature, music, science, and finally his blindness which rendered him to envision the vast spaces and vast figures of which *Paradise Lost* is composed, all these various influences are reflected in the imagery of the literary attempt to justify the ways of God to man.

Concerning the range of his legend of Adam and a spiritual journey and through, and that he drew his images in the same flow from nature. However, nature and plays an important part in his imagery as we have discovered, particularly in nature. He was his employment of the simple selected order of the Platonic system enabled him to carry the theme of 'the Fall' to full fruition.

In *Paradise Lost* imagery is seen as the dominating glory of sunlight. The dominant image is light, many other and manifestation of it: the sun, moon, stars, fire, lightning; and in contrast to these, darkness, midnight, rain and snow, which epitomizes evil.

Milton thinks of God in terms of light and we find that books I-III, IV-VI particularly contain light images. Of course Milton rarely employs

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## Chapter VII

## Conclusion

By viewing John Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*, in the light of his imagery, I have attempted to show the direct relationship between this imagery and his background, and how this imagery reveals definite information about his personality.

His long and arduous preparation for the task of composing his great epic, his home environment, the literature he studied, his love for nature, music, science, and finally his blindness which enabled him to envision the vast spaces and vast figures of which Paradise Lost is comprised..all these varied influences are reflected in the imagery of his literary attempt to justify the ways of God to man.

Concerning the range of his images we find him a scholar through and through, and that he draws his images in the main from books. However, nature too plays an important part in his imagery as we have discovered, particularly astronomy. We saw how his employment of the simple celestial order of the Ptolemaic system enabled him to carry the theme of 'the Fall' to full fruition.

In Paradise Lost goodness is seen as the irradiating glory of sunlight. The dominant image is light, every form and manifestation of it: the sun, moon, stars, fire, lightning; while by contrast we have night, darkness, clouds, rain and smoke, which epitomizes evil.

Milton thinks of God in terms of light and we find that Books I-II, IV-IX particularly contain light images. Of course Milton rarely employs





light without emphasizing the degree of intensity or purity of this light by contrasting it with shadow.

Movement provides the underlying current which sweeps us from the Empyrean through Chaos into Hell; from Pandemonium to the outer crust of the newly created Universe; over the wall of Paradise into Eden. We discover that the movements of beings, of objects, of ideas, are the basic elements which make up this 'sweeping current'.

I have made previous mention of his healthy body, of his ability with the sword, of his being intensely sensitive, keenly observant until blindness befell him. His intensity, his sensitivity was reflected in the vigor of his literary battle.

We also observe his musical ear is very acute, that Paradise Lost resounds of rich organ overtones, full of resonant chords and light melodies.

The Old and New Testaments, and classical mythology serve as a source of numerous images in Paradise Lost. I mentioned earlier that Milton commonly uses a situation for the purpose of introducing classical mythology. However, we observe that Hebraic and Christian Biblical writings were also drawn upon in the same manner.

In reference to Milton's images I find they lack the specificness, variety and detail of Shakespeare's images. For instance, to Milton, Eve's skin is 'soft' and 'white'; to Shakespeare, Desdemona's skin is 'smooth as monumental alabaster', Perdita's hands, 'soft as dove's down', he describes Venus' 'smooth moist hand', the 'flower-soft' hands of Cleopatra's maidens, and so on. Milton suffers by contrast with

light effects, depending on the degree of intensity or purity of the light.

The phenomenon is first observed.

It is found that the underlying current is not steady as from the

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Shakespeare in this respect. However, because the theme is so broad, so all-compassing, Paradise Lost does not suffer by Milton's lack of this quality.

It seems to me that a study of Milton's imagery from the angle from which we have been looking at it helps us to realize a little more fully and accurately one of the many ways by which he so magically stirs our emotions and excites our imaginations. I hope it not only does this, but even throws a fresh ray of light on the significance of Paradise Lost, and on the way Milton saw it.

In closing, I want to add that throughout his work one may trace five outstanding qualities of his nature--sensitiveness, pain, courage, wholesomeness and individuality. If he is abnormally sensitive, he is unusually courageous, mentally and spiritually. The intense sensitiveness, the vividness of his imagination, make his courage the more remarkable. What most rouses his anger is hypocrisy and injustice, what he values supremely is kindness and mercy.

In looking at evil, he sees it, with pity and concern as a foul and corrupt condition or growth produced by God--since the first sin was committed in Heaven.

unpleasant in this respect. However, because the time is so short, and  
the committee, I believe, does not suffer by Wilson's lack of this

quality.  
It seems to me that a study of Wilson's life, from the humble beginnings  
when we have been looking at it in light of his little known family  
and especially one of the days of which I am especially sure, and  
emotions and which our imagination. I hope it not only teaches, but  
even shows a fresh way of light in the development of Wilson's life,  
and on the way Wilson was it.

In closing, I want to say that throughout his work and his time  
the outstanding quality of his nature - sensitivity, calm, courage,  
knowledge and individuality. It is in his personality, as in  
nearly every aspect, that we find the individual. The human individuality,  
the witness of his individuality, which his work and his life  
that we know, the work is a witness, and his work, and his work  
especially is a witness to his work.

In closing, as well, he was it, with his work and his work  
court committee or given produced by the work and his work  
committee in Boston.



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